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The Development of Hindu Iconography

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MUNSHIRAM MANOHARLAL

The Development of Hindu Iconography

Jitendra Nath Banerjea

frontispiece

Gaṇeśa (Khiching, Orissa)

The Development of Hindu Iconography

Jitendra Nath Banerjea

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To
THE SACRED MEMORY
OF
SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE

Dr. Jitendra Nath Banerjea

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

A revised and enlarged edition of the *Development of Hindu Iconography* was being contemplated by me, since its first edition (1941) had run out of print several years ago. Scholars interested in the religion and art of ancient and mediaeval India appear to have found something of interest in the book, otherwise the need for its second edition could not have been felt in such a comparatively short time. When I was requested by the publishers to revise it for a second edition, I not only revised it thoroughly, but also incorporated much fresh matter into it, thus enlarging it to nearly double its original size. The topics dealt with in the first edition were mainly connected with the general principles, early types and iconographic and iconometric technicalities. So I intended to follow it up with volumes dealing with the developmental aspects of the different groups of cult icons, and this intention was expressed by me in its preface. But due to various reasons none of the volumes could be published, though manuscripts of some of them were made ready for the press. Dr. Stella Kramrisch, Professor of Fine Arts in the University of Calcutta at that time, and Editor of the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, requested me to make over the chapters for publication in the Journal. Four elaborate chapters, three dealing with the Viṣṇuite icons and one with those of Sūrya, were published in Volumes XIII, XIV and XVI of the same. Very few plates, however, could be inserted in them to illustrate the icons, the idea being that they would appear in the monograph, *Viṣṇu and Sūrya*, to be brought out separately. After a great deal of progress had been made in this matter, the project fell through mostly due to the intransigence of the printers of those volumes of the Journal. Thus, my original intention did not materialise, and when the second edition of the

book was taken up by the University Press, I utilised the opportunity to add four big chapters on different cult icons, including miscellaneous and syncretistic groups. In doing so, I confined myself mainly to their essential features which would specially emphasise the aspect of their growth and development.

In dealing with the cult icons, I have thought it necessary to present in broad outlines the history of the origin and development of the different Brahmanical Hindu cults. I have also given brief accounts of some of the principal cult tenets, in order that groups of images illustrating them in an esoteric manner may be properly understood. The Vyantara Devatās, or the folk divinities, have been considered first, for they are the divine entities centering round whom the primitive cults of Bhakti first originated. I have included the iconographic types of Gaṇapati, Kārttikeya, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in this group, for I believe that these deities were originally recruited from the category of the folk gods and goddesses. True it is, that compared with the original Vedic gods like Indra, Mitra, Vāyu, Varuṇa and others, such cult deities of the epic and Purāṇic order like Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Śiva and Śakti contain a considerable amount of popular element in them; but at the same time many features and ideologies that are distinctly Vedic in character are absorbed in them. Thus, various groups of icons associated with the major Brahmanical Hindu cults have been discussed in Chapters X and XI, where their composite character has been delineated. Icons of Brahmā and the Aṣṭadikpālas, as well as those of such accessories to the major cult deities, like Garuḍa, Nandin and the Āyudhapuruṣas, have been commented on in the first part of the twelfth or the last chapter, the characteristic traits of various groups of syncretistic icons being dealt with in the second part. I can justifiably claim that I have been the first person to give a full and systematic consideration to these very interesting groups of images, only a few among which (Hari-Hara, Ardhanārīśvara, Viṣṇu-Lokeśvara and Mārttaṇḍa-Bhairava) having been incidentally noticed by previous scholars. Two sections, (a) and

(d), of Appendix A of the first edition (' Image worship and the Pāñcarātra ' and ' Dhulicitra ') have been incorporated in Chapters X and VI of the present edition, while two new topics, ' The Ideology behind the Hindu Images ' and ' Some Purāṇic Deities in Vedic Texts ' have been inserted in their place as sections (c) and (d) in it. I have also changed the order of the two parts of Appendix B, giving precedence to Chapter 57 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the whole of which with its English translation and notes has been incorporated. There is no change in the remaining portions of the Appendices.

The first edition of the book contained only ten plates, six being reproductions of line blocks, the rest being of half-tone ones. The addition of the chapters on cult icons in the present edition has made many more illustrations necessary, and I have been at pains to make them as full as possible under the circumstances. Sri A. Ghosh, the Director-General of Archaeology in India, Sri C. Sivaramamurti, the former Superintendent of the Archaeological Section, Indian Museum, and Sri S. K. Saraswati, once a student and now a distinguished colleague of mine in the University, rendered a great deal of assistance to me in the acquisition of a large number of photographs of images from various Museums and other collections of India, from which a fairly representative selection was made. I am grateful to all of them for this help. I am also indebted to Sri D. P. Ghosh, the Curator of the Asutosh Museum, for the loan of five blocks from the collection of the same. My cordial thanks are also due to the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Bombay and to the Indian Society of Oriental Art (Calcutta) for lending me nine and eight good blocks from their respective collections for reproduction in this edition. To the old line blocks have been added a few new ones which are being reproduced in Plates VII and VIII. These as well as the new half-tone blocks were prepared by Messrs. Bharat Phototype Studio.

In the selection of specimens for illustrations, I have been guided more by their iconographic features, than by their artistic excellence, though a good many of the images

illustrated here are also of a high order from the art point of view. Some of the best examples of Orissan sculptural art, notably those from Khiching (Mayurbhanj), have been reproduced here; many of them were not given their proper share of recognition by previous scholars. Images selected for illustration hail mostly from Northern, Eastern and Southern India, though images belonging to Central and Western India do not go unrepresented. It is true that many of the images selected belong to the category of the oft-reproduced ones; but I found it necessary to select them for demonstrating my own interpretation about them with the help of textual and archaeological data. The attention of the readers may be drawn to one only among them in this connection. None of the early mediaeval reliefs of India possessing artistic merit of a very high order has been reproduced oftener than the so-called Trimūrti of Elephanta. But I have illustrated it again for substantiating my own suggestion about its true import (*cf.* pp. 476-77). I would have been happy to include in the illustrations many images that have been least reproduced or that still remain unreproduced. But the acquisition of good photographs of them has not been easy, and for dealing with the developmental aspect of the cult icons many of the well-known ones have been very useful. It may also be noted here that iconography is such a vast subject that it is impossible for any one scholar to do full justice to it. It requires a band of earnest workers in the field to devote their energy and scholarship to the general as well as regional studies of this fascinating branch of Indology in order that many facets of the composite culture of India may be correctly interpreted.

The Bibliographic Index in the first edition of this book has been replaced by a general Bibliography. A selective index (including entries only up to Appendix A) has been prepared in which modern place names and names of modern authors have not been generally included. I have given a detailed list of contents, in which the numerous topics discussed in the different chapters are separately entered pagewise. I hope that it will be of much more use

to the readers than separate folio headings or very short summaries in the beginning of each chapter. The usual list of abbreviations has also been inserted in its proper place. The list of illustrations with cross references to chapters (in the case of line-drawings) and pages (in the case of half-tone reproductions) has been carefully prepared, and usual courtesy-acknowledgements made in its end.

I shall fail in my duty if I do not express here my gratefulness to a number of persons who helped me considerably in seeing this edition through the press. Professor Haridas Bhattacharyya, lately of the Hindu University, Banaras, kindly looked through the proofs of the first eight chapters very carefully and helped me in correcting many misprints and slips; his sad death two months ago has created a void in the field of scholarship, and it has been a matter of personal loss to me. Shri S. K. Saraswati kindly read the final proofs of the added chapters and looked through the arrangement of the plates. Mrs. Devala Mitra, one of my former students and now an Assistant Superintendent in the Archaeological Department of India, kindly checked the references given in the first eight chapters and found out some mistakes which have been put in the errata. Shri Bratindranath Mukherjee, one of my students in the Sixth-Year class, has been of some help to me in the preparation of the index. I am deeply grateful to all of them, without whose assistance it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, for me to see this enlarged edition through the press. My cordial thanks are also due to Sri Sibendranath Kanjilal, the Superintendent of the Calcutta University Press, and his staff, particularly to Sri Asutosh Bhattacharyya, B.A., the Head Proof Reader, for their unfailing courtesy to me and their prompt and earnest attention to my work. Lastly, I should like to express my gratitude to Sri S. C. Ghosh, the Treasurer, and Sri D. Chakravarti, the Registrar of the University of Calcutta, for the interest taken by them in the publication of this edition. The book was to have come out in the month of December, 1955; I regret that due to some unforeseen circumstances its publication has been delayed.

There has been some inconsistency in the spelling of place names, and in spite of all endeavour, a few errors have crept in. Most of these have been corrected in the errata. Some wrong references to plates in the text have also been set right in the list of illustrations. A few more slips might have escaped my notice. I hope they are minor ones for which I crave the indulgence of my readers.

CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY,
The 31st of March, 1956.

JITENDRA NATH BANERJEA

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

T. A. G. Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography* (Vols. I and II, published under the auspices of the Travancore State in 1914 and 1916 respectively) has so long been and still is the standard work on the subject. Some other works on it, such as H. Krishna Sastri's *South Indian Gods and Goddesses*, B. C. Bhattacharya's *Indian Images*, Part I, J. Dubreuil's *South Indian Iconography*, the Brahmanical section of N. K. Bhattasali's *Iconography of the Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, etc., have been published since then. Krishna Sastri's and Dubreuil's works, as their names imply, deal with the South Indian images only, while Bhattacharya's book treats of several North Indian Hindu images of the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods. Bhattasali discusses the special features of the Brahmanical sculptures found mostly in Eastern Bengal. So none of these works can claim to be as full and comprehensive as the monumental work of T. A. G. Rao. But comprehensive as the latter is, it still lacks certain features which are essential for the study of Hindu Iconography. Rao, no doubt, collected a number of very useful iconographic texts (many of which were then unpublished, some are still so even now) in the appendices to his volumes, and reproduced numerous early and late mediaeval and some modern sculptures, mostly South Indian, to illustrate the same, but the development of the individual iconographic types has seldom been discussed by him. To show this development, it is not only necessary to study critically the extant reliefs and single sculptures of the Gupta, Kushan and pre-Kushan periods, but a careful and systematic handling of the numismatic and glyptic remains of India of the same periods is also indispensable. When earlier sculptural types of gods and goddesses are not available, ancient Indian coin and seal devices help us remarkably in determining the mode of their

representation in the remote past. To refer to one or two instances: The Buddha type on Kanishka's coins, the Gaja-Lakṣmī device on the coins of Bahasatimita, Azilises and Rajuvula, and the ' Varāha avatāra ' one on the ' Ādivarāha drammas of the Gurjara Pratihāra king Bhoja I, fully show how they were based on the contemporary representations of the same divinities in Indian plastic art.

Not only have the above-mentioned data not been utilised by Rao, but the earliest monumental and epigraphic ones also have not been fully made use of by him. But his was a pioneer work, and it must be said that many of the above materials were not available to him. In the course of long years of teaching the subject to the Post-Graduate students of the Calcutta University, I felt the need of the systematic collection of the above materials and their careful study in relation to Hindu Iconography. The present work is the outcome of years of collection and first-hand study of not only such archaeological data, but also of bringing together many new texts relevant to the subject, which have not yet been fully noticed. This volume, however, mainly deals with the general principles of Hindu Iconography, and the early iconographic types of Hindu divinities as determinable by ancient Indian coins and seals. It is thus complete in itself, and I intend to follow it up with two more volumes dealing with the numerous Hindu cult images and their accessories.

In the first chapter of this book, after giving an idea about the subject itself, I have indicated the lines in which the study of Hindu Iconography should be conducted and the varieties of materials handled in its scientific treatment. The second and third chapters contain elaborate discussions about the antiquity and origin of image-worship in India. In them I have tried to appraise critically the views of previous scholars on the above problems and have given my own based on literary and archaeological data. In the fourth and fifth chapters I have shown how the ancient Indian coins and seal-impressions can materially help us in ascertaining the early iconographic types of a number of Hindu divinities

and their emblems, many of which would have otherwise remained unknown to us. In the sixth chapter I have elaborately discussed the technique of the Iconoplastic art in India with the help of a variety of indigenous texts, few of which were critically studied by the previous writers on the subject. I have also discussed there the various factors which contributed to the development of this art in India and the nature and extent of their individual contributions. In the seventh chapter have been explained the various technical terms and terminologies that are frequently to be found in iconographic texts, a correct knowledge of which is essential to every student of Hindu Iconography. In the eighth and last chapter the Indian canons of Iconometry have been discussed, a proper understanding of which is necessary for the study of this subject. In course of this I have instituted a brief comparison of the Indian canons with those followed by the Egyptian and the Hellenistic artists of ancient times. It has been found necessary to add three appendices to my book, in the second one of which I have re-edited the iconometric text entitled ' *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* ' with translation and notes. In all these tasks I have often referred to the views of various previous writers; reasons have often been adduced by me, whether I accepted or rejected them. I may submit here that my method in the above studies is mainly objective, and I have approached the subject chiefly as a student of history and archaeology. This is the reason why I could not utilise some comparatively recent publications of eminent authors, which, remarkable as they are, treat Iconography from an angle different from that of mine.

Ten plates are appended to this work, the first five of which contain drawings carefully made by Mr. S. Banerjee, artist, under my supervision, from early Indian coin and seal-devices and sculptures; the last four plates are reproductions of the reverse figures of some coins and of a few seal-impressions. These mostly illustrate the fourth, fifth and the seventh chapters of my book. Figures 1, 2, 3 in plate No. VI illustrate my observations contained in the last chapter; figure 4 in the same plate shows the broad proportions

of the height of a human body followed by modern artists of the West.

A few words about the system of transliteration adopted in the following pages are necessary. I have followed the system recommended in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, with slight modification; for example, I have invariably used *ṃ* in place of *ṁ* to denote an *anusvāra*. In writing modern place names as well as ancient ones still current, I have usually desisted from the use of diacritical marks. But sometimes, due to oversight, the same name (*e.g.*, Gandhāra) has been spelt with or without these marks; but such lapses, I hope, are comparatively few.

I have prepared a General Index as well as a Bibliographic one for the convenience of my readers. Attempt has been made to make both as full and comprehensive as possible; Sanskrit words of technical import have been incorporated into the former.

It was the late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee who first kindly offered me facilities for studying Indian art and archaeology. I take this opportunity to dedicate my book to his sacred memory as a token of gratitude and esteem which I shall always cherish for him. I am also greatly indebted to his worthy son, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, the President of the Post-Graduate Council in Arts, for the encouragement I always received from him in my work, for which I shall remain ever grateful to him. My former teacher and the present head of my department, Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri has taken a keen interest in my work all along and I am much obliged to him for a few suggestions of his, which I have incorporated in the first chapter. Dr. P. C. Bagchi, my esteemed friend and colleague, has laid me under deep obligation by kindly allowing me to use the manuscript copy of '*Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam*' which was brought by him from Nepal sometime ago. Dr. Stella Kramrisch, my distinguished colleague, kindly went through most of the book, while it was being seen through the press. Mr. S. K. Saraswati, one of my former pupils and now one of my colleagues, has obliged me with some practical suggestions in the formal get-up of

the book and in other matters. I am also much indebted to Dr. N. N. Law, the learned editor of the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, for kindly allowing me to utilise several blocks which were prepared at his expense to illustrate two of my articles published in his Journal. I should also express my obligation to him and to the Joint Editors of the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* for permitting me to incorporate in this volume a few of my articles published in their respective Journals. I cannot but be grateful to the different authorities of the Indian Museums, especially Calcutta and Punjab Museums, and the authorities of the British Museum, London, for kindly allowing me to reproduce a few of the coins and seals in their collection, all of which have been previously published. I shall remain thankful to Mr. J. C. Chakravorti, the Registrar of the Calcutta University, for his great help in the publication of this volume. My thanks are also due to Mr. D. Ganguly, the Superintendent of the Calcutta University Press, and the members of his staff, for the unfailing courtesy and kind attention which were shown to me while the book was going through the press.

A few errors and misprints in the following pages could not be avoided; certain suggestions relevant to different topics discussed in the book occurred to me when the particular sections had been printed off. The former have been corrected and the latter added in the few pages on Additions and Corrections. Some more printing and other errors might have escaped my notice, for which I crave the indulgence of my readers. No one is more conscious than myself about my own limitations; I can only say that I have made an honest effort to throw some new light, however small and fitful it may be, on the study of Hindu Iconography. It is for my readers to judge how far I have been successful in the attempt.

CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY,
1st December, 1941.

JITENDRA NATH BANERJEA.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.I.A.A.—Annual Bibliography of Indian Art and Archaeology (Kern Institute, Leyden).

A.S.I.A.R.—Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India (New Series), by J. Marshall.

A.S.R.—Archaeological Survey Report (Old Series), by A. Cunningham.

A.V.—Atharvaveda.

B.M.C.
B.M.C.G.S.K.I.
B.M.C.C.G.S.K.I. } British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of India, by P. Gardner.

C.A.I.—Coins of Ancient India, by A. Cunningham.

C.C.A.I.—Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India, by J. Allan.

C.C.A.W.K.T.B.—Catalogue of Coins of the Andhra, Western Kṣatrapa, Traikūṭaka and Bodhi Dynasties, by E. J. Rapson.

C.C.G.D.B.M.
C.G.C.B.M. } Catalogue of Coins of the Gupta Dynasty in the British Museum, by J. Allan.

C.I.K.
C.C.I.K. } Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans, by A. Cunningham

C.C.I.M.—Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, by V. A. Smith.

C.I.I.—Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.

D.H.B.—Dacca History of Bengal.

E.I.S.M.S.—Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture, by R. D. Banerji.

H.I.I.A.—History of Indian and Indonesian Art, by A. K. Coomaraswamy.

I.A.—Indian Antiquary.

I.H.Q.—Indian Historical Quarterly.

J.A.O.S.—Journal of the American Oriental Society.

J.A.S.B.
J.R.A.S.B. } Journal of the Asiatic Society (or Royal Asiatic Society) of Bengal.

J.B.R.S.—Journal of the Bihar Research Society.

J.B.O.R.S.—Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
J.D.L.—Journal of the Department of Letters (Calcutta University).
J.G.I.S.—Journal of the Greater India Society.
J.I.S.O.A.—Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.
J.N.S.I.—Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
J.U.P.H.S.—Journal of the U.P. Historical Society.
J.R.A.S.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
M.A.S.I.—Memoir of the Archaeological Survey of India.
M.I.C.—Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilisation, by John Marshall.
M.M.C.—Mathura Museum Catalogue, by J. Ph. Vogel.
N.C.—Numismatic Chronicle.
O.Z. (Ost. Zeit.)—Ost-Asiatische Zeitschrift.
P.M.C.—Punjab Museum Catalogue of Coins, by R. B. Whitehead.
R.V.—Ṛgveda.
S.B.—Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.
S.B.E.—Sacred Books of the East.
Śvet. Up.—Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.
V.R.S.—Varendra Research Society.
Z.D.M.G.—Zeitschrift der Morgenlandischen Geschelshaft (Journal of the German Oriental Society).

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CHAPTER I

Study of Hindu Iconography

The term *Icon* (*ikon*, Gr. *eikon*) means a figure representing a deity, or a saint, in painting, mosaic, sculpture, etc., which is specially meant for worship or which is in some way or other associated with the rituals connected with the worship of different divinities. Thus, though this is not exactly the same as a fetishistic symbol used for their crude ritualism by undeveloped mankind, yet it is not very far removed from the latter; it has attached to it. however, some higher clear-cut conception which is missing in the other. This Greek word *eikon* with its above connotation has its close parallel in such Indian terms as *arcā*, *bera*, *vigraha*, etc., which definitely denote sensible representations of particular deities or saints receiving the devout homage of their *bhaktas* or exclusive worshippers. Euphemistically, these are often described in various Indian texts as the very body or form of the gods concerned (*tanu* or *rūpa*). These representations are mainly anthropomorphic or theriomorphic in character, but they may also at times be purely symbolic without any such explicit form. The special branch of knowledge or study which deals with these images is generally known as *Iconography*, a proper understanding of which enables one to be quite conversant about one of the most important aspects of the religious life of certain races of mankind. But this branch of knowledge is not merely concerned with the study and interpretation of the characteristics of the principal icons or images proper which are enshrined in the main sanctum of a temple or church, but it also

deals with the delineation of the special features and the understanding of the true significance of the figure-sculptures, frescoes or such other objects which are executed on different parts of the shrine mainly for decorative purpose. Thus, in its broader sense, the term *iconography* really signifies the interpretative aspect of the religious art of a country, which becomes manifest in diverse ways. Even before the evolution of the image proper representing the principal deity of the cult, when such a divinity is usually represented by various aniconic symbols as in the case of early Buddhism, the monuments (mostly funerary in character) associated with it contain numbers of reliefs illustrative of various mythological stories connected with it. Thus, the early remains of Bharhut and Sanchi, which are really funerary monuments, do not contain any icon of the Master (in the developed sense of an anthropomorphic representation), but contain numerous figure-sculptures, medallions and reliefs which are extremely interesting to any student of religious art of India. A proper interpretation of these scenes reproduced in stone reliefs falls necessarily under the province of a student of iconography, and he will do scanty justice to his subject if he fails to take note of them. In another respect, the interpretation of pictures painted on canvas, manuscript covers or such other objects, *e.g.*, the banner paintings (*tańkas*) of Nepal, Tibet and Central Asia, etc., also falls within the scope of this subject when it is conceived in its broader aspect. But, it must never be lost sight of, that in all these cases, a definite religious character must permeate all such objects, in order that their study and interpretation may come under this branch of knowledge.

The above account of the nature of the subject will fully prove how it is intimately connected with religion. In fact, it is nothing but the interpretation of the religious art of man. It has been time and often shown by various scholars that the art of man in its very beginnings is mainly religious in character. Grünwedel observes, " The most important basis for the development of an independent art among any people lies in its religion." Della Setta, in the work on

Religion and Art has shown the intimate connection which exists between the art and religion of various nations of the world. This deep association is the more pronounced in the case of the early Indians. Grünwedel has rightly remarked, " The religious character, so deeply rooted in the national life of the Indian races, has also continued the guiding principle in their art." [1] Foucher has in a very striking manner endeavoured to show how the innate religious tendencies of the Buddhists have been mainly responsible for the beginnings and dissemination of the Buddhist art in India.[2] Thus, this intimate association between the religion and art being clearly demonstrable, it is hardly necessary to point out how the study of iconography helps one to understand the nature of religious practices indulged in by some races of mankind. In the very first instance, the discussion about the presence or absence of the practice of image worship among the early Indo-Aryan races in connection with the study of this subject will enable the student of Indian Iconography to get hold of positive data for the true evaluation and appraisement of their religion. An intensive and historical study of this subject will throw much valuable light on the gradual changes which were constantly being introduced in certain well-defined religious practices of the Hindus. The ever-increasing pantheon of a particular cult and the constant increase in mythological stories associated with it will find a ready illustration in the iconographic representations, which will throw very interesting sidelight on these transformations. Sometimes, a proper and scientific study of this subject will

[1] Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 1. But he seems to have gone too far when he remarks in the same place that " the architecture as well as the sculpture (of India), which has always been intimately connected therewith, was never and nowhere employed for secular purposes." That there certainly flourished a well-developed secular art, which was mainly utilised in the building of royal palaces and in the construction of cities and forts, etc., is clearly vouchsafed not only by the indigenous literary texts, but also by the accounts left by foreign travellers in ancient and mediaeval India. Again, the art of sculpture was employed in the execution of royal statuaries which, though at times endowed with some sacred character, were mainly secular ones.

[2] Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, Ch. I, pp. 10-13; pl. 1.

help us in correcting errors made by previous scholars in the understanding of the religious practices of different peoples. Thus, Fergusson, after a close observation of the reliefs of Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati, remarked that about one-half of the bas-reliefs of Sanchi. . . . represented religious acts such as the worship of the *dāgoba* or of trees; once or twice the wheel was the object of adoration and once the serpent. Now, this explanation of the significance of many of the above reliefs has been proved to be erroneous by the patient researches of subsequent scholars. No student of iconography would interpret them in that way at present; but what he would find in them is that in most cases the trees within railings, with a rectangular seat underneath them, especially when they are adorned with garlands and parasols, are really the tangible emblems of the Master or his predecessors who are not iconically represented; other trees without these honorific adjuncts are really the *rukkha-cetiyas*, not usually objects of worship by themselves but so many objects of veneration because of their being residences of different Yakṣas. The *dāgobas* or *dhātugarbhas*, funerary structures, also symbolise the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* of Śākyamuni Buddha or that of the other Buddhas that preceded him. In the case of the Nāgas, Yakṣas, Yakṣiṇīs, etc., who can be recognised in the reliefs, it is to be observed that originally they were no doubt objects of worship, but they are depicted on these monuments in quite an opposite role, *viz.*, in that of so many worshippers of the Bhagavān Buddha. Fergusson, even in that early stage of the study of iconography, could partially hit the truth when he remarked in the same context, " There are also half a dozen scenes that can be identified with more or less certainty as representing events in the life of Śākyamuni " ; but his statement that there is " a considerable number of representations of scenes in domestic life, regarding which it will probably be impossible ever to feel sure that we know who the actors in them are,"[1] has

[1] J. Fergussen, *Tree and Serpent Worship in Ancient India*, 2nd ed., p. 104.

been modified to a great extent in the light of subsequent research.

The study of this subject also throws some interesting sidelight on the presence of rivalry and jealousy between diverse Indian sects. In the whole history of religious developments in India, there might not have been many instances of intense hatred and violent strife between the members of rival sects as are to be found in the religious history of Europe.[1] But these sectarian animosities of the Indians found vent through the milder channel of concoction of mythological stories and construction of interesting images in illustration thereof. Thus, the story about Śiva having incarnated himself as Śarabha for the chastisement of Narasiṃha (an incarnatory form of Viṣṇu, itself an outcome of sectarian rivalry—Hiraṇyakaśipu, an ardent devotee of Śiva, was killed by Viṣṇu in this hybrid form, on account of his bitter denunciation and cruel persecution of his own son who was an exclusive worshipper of Hari) was illustrated by the peculiar image of Śarabha, none other than Śiva himself in the composite form of man, bird and beast, killing Narasiṃha with his claws. In the creation of many other images, this characteristic mode of giving vent to sectarian ill-feeling is clearly discernible. Just the opposite tendency is to be marked in the case of other icons which illustrate genuine attempts towards a reconciliation between the principal rival sects. The images of Hari-Hara, Ardhanārīśvara and such others can be distinctly shown to bear traces of this different mental approach to religious problems. In the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, there are several sculptures which emphasise this peculiarity; on the four sides of roughly square Śiva-liṅgas are carved the figures of Viṣṇu, Durgā-Pārvatī, Sūrya and Gaṇapati, which four, along with the central liṅga, symbolise the cult pictures of the five principal sects, *viz.*,

[1] But reference may be made to the story of the impalement of the Jainas through the efforts of a renowned Śaiva saint of Southern India, *viz.*, Tirujñāna-sambandha; a less known era used to be current among the Śaivas there, the initial year of which dated from this event.

Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, Saura, Gāṇapatya and Śaiva. Miniature shrines, with the representations of these chief sectarian gods carved on their different sides, mostly of early and late mediaeval period, have been discovered in various places of northern India, especially at Banaras which has been the happy home of the different Hindu sects from remote past. These emblems are evidently the objects of worship of the Smārtas who are eclectic in their religious concepts. Guided mainly by the rules laid down in the Smṛtis like those of Manu and Yājñavalkya, they worship the five cult deities (*pañcopāsanā, pañcāyatana pūjā*). Spirit of reconciliation and rapprochement between the different sects is present behind this sort of mental attitude in religion. A brief reference may also be made in this connection to at least one of the Brahmanical Hindu icon types where even distinct traces of Buddhist iconic motif are discernible. A very favourite mode of representing Lakulīśa in eastern India (especially Orissa) is to show him as Buddha in the great miracle of Śrāvastī. Like the latter, he is seated on a double-petalled lotus being raised up by two Nāga kings, and his hands are in the *dharma-cakra mudrā*. In some reliefs, even the two deer and the wheel (*dharma-cakra*) are carved on the pedestal. This is a sure sign of Buddhism and its art motifs being absorbed by the rival creed. Many other cases of this cult amalgam and absorption can be cited.

The importance of the study of this subject can also be rightly emphasised from the point of view of its association with artistic studies. Many images of the gods and goddesses are in themselves great works of art, and a proper and careful study of these will enable students of iconography to acquaint themselves with the general character of the artistic achievements of different races. The excellence or decadence of art in particular localities in different periods can be easily demonstrated with the help of images found in those places. The study of a Buddha image of Sarnath belonging to the fifth or sixth century A.D. or a Brahmanical or Buddhist bronze or stone image of Magadha or Bengal of the early Pāla period would not fail to impress on the student

of iconography the flourishing nature of the iconoplastic art in those places, at different times. Similarly, a Buddhist or Brahmanical stone image from Bengal of the late Sena period will throw light on the artistic decadence which had already set in there. Thus, these images form the true index of the achievements in the domain of religious art and are, in this manner, very interesting aids to the study of the artistic activities of particular races.

Sculptures or images are sometimes indirectly very useful for shedding light on obscure periods of political or general history of India. The inscriptions which are sometimes carved on their pedestals contain in many cases the names not only of their donors, but also of those of the sovereigns during whose reign these were constructed; on some of them again, we can decipher dates which materially help us in the reconstruction of little known periods of history. These images are very often definitely illustrative of the general cultural level of their makers; they are also at times clear indicators of the social traits of the people who made and worshipped them. The conception underlying them illustrate, too, in a remarkable manner the inner workings of the human mind, and a proper and scientific study of their different groups very often acquaints us with the psychological factors which lay at the origin and evolution of these images.

The importance of this branch of study having been emphasised in the previous paragraphs, it is necessary to take stock of the different materials which are required for its prosecution. The first and foremost data to be utilised in this connection are evidently of monumental or archaeological character. The extant images or sculptures themselves are to be closely studied by every student of this subject in order to acquire proficiency in it. By a proper and scientific study of them, it will be possible for us not only to trace the gradual evolution of the art of image-making and the practice of worshipping these images, but also to classify them satisfactorily in ordered groups and understand the underlying peculiarities of the constituents of each of these groups. Besides the images proper, reliefs

carved on sections of religious architecture or figures appearing on extant painted frescoes and such other objects, are important data in this connection. Two other archaeological data which have been practically ignored by most of the previous writers on Brahmanical Hindu iconography, but which are extremely important for its study, are of epigraphic and numismatic character. Foucher and Coomaraswamy have no doubt utilised these sources in their scholarly works on Indian art and iconography ; but few writers on Brahmanical iconography have cared to avail themselves of these materials. Figures of divinities on the coins of particular localities belonging to different periods will indicate the manner of their representation that was in vogue in different times and places. It is very often the case that we do not light upon comparatively early specimens of images in various localities of northern India ; in such cases, the coins discovered in those places are sure to help us in a very remarkable manner to determine the early iconographic types of various gods and goddesses worshipped there. It is needless to remark further that these numismatic depictions of deities are in many cases really based on the actual sculptural representations of them. Where both the early sculptural type and its numismatic counterpart are extant, we do not fail to find very close parallelism. Thus, the figure of Buddha belonging to the second century A.D. is well represented in plastic form among the Gandhāra sculptures ; when we compare it with the numismatic type appearing on the coins of Kanishka and clearly described by the Kushan die-cutter as CAKAYMO BO ΔΛO (Śākyamuni Buddha), we are struck by the great similarity between these two. The figure of a Śiva or a Mahāsena has not so far been discovered among the extant Gandhāra sculptures of the second or the third century A.D. ; but when we find the devices on certain coins of Kanishka and Huvishka delineating the features of either of these divinities definitely described by the die-cutters as such, it will not at all be presumptuous to conclude that these forms are some of those in which the two abovenamed gods used to be plastically represented during

the period. It will then be interesting to compare their early features with the peculiar traits of the extant icons of a later period. We find the figure of an enthroned deity, with the figure of an elephant or the forepart of an elephant with its trunk upraised in front of it, on some coins of Eukratides, Antialkidas and certain other Indo-Greek rulers ; on a particular coin-type of Antialkidas, we find the same deity walking by the side of the elephant striding to right with its trunk upraised. On some coins of Maues the same god seated on throne is shown to place his hand on the head of the personified *vajra* (thunderbolt). It has been proved by me that these coin-devices are nothing but the various ways of representing Indra (very easily identified by the Greeks with their Zeus) who was the tutelary deity of Śvetavatālaya or Indrapura, a locality in the neighbourhood of ancient Kapiśā, on the basis of certain observations of Hiuen Tsang and an explicit statement in the *Mahāmāyūrī*.[1] This point can be substantiated further by a reference to the coin-types of the Greek city-states ; these, when they represented different Hellenic divinities like Zeus, Heracles, Pallas Athene, Artemis, Nike and others, were actually based on their sculptural representations current in those localities. In many cases they were tutelary deities and cult divinities of such city-states, and they made their appearance as such on the coins.[2] In an opposite manner, the devices appearing on the earliest indigenous coins of India shed a flood of light on the problem of symbolic representations of gods and goddesses. Coomaraswamy, while referring to the number of symbols (*rūpa*) appearing on the punch-marked coins " in general use from about 600 B.C. up to the beginning of the Kushan period or somewhat later," makes the following interesting observation, " . . . the importance of these

[1] *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1938, Vol. XIV, pp. 293-308.

[2] Not to speak of very well-known examples, we can refer to the coin-types of two inland Cretan cities of Rhaucus and Sybrita. The former state had a cult of Poseidon Hippios. " The god holding a trident stands beside his horse " ; Dionysus and Hermes were the gods of Sybrita and appeared as obverse and reverse devices of her coins : C. Seltman, *Greek Coins*, p. 173.

symbols, many of which have remained in use to the present day, lies in the fact that they represent a definite early Indian style, amounting to an explicit iconography." [1]

Inscriptions, too, in a remarkable manner, serve as important data for the study of iconography. Many of these not only inform us about the peculiarities of religious cults with which, as we have seen above, our subject is intimately associated, but also record the erection of shrines and construction of images of divinities to be enshrined in them. On some rare occasions, they even contain rough descriptions of the iconographic features of the deities, the erection of whose shrines is being recorded in them. The so-called Ghosundi inscription of the second century B.C. refers to the erection of a *pūja-śilā-prākāra* round the shrines of Saṁkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva, which presumably contained the images of these gods. Many and various are the Gupta epigraphic records which refer to the creation of shrines of such divinities as Bhavānī, Kātyāyanī, Śiva, Swāmi-Mahāsena, Viṣṇu-Śārṅgin, Buddha, Mahāvīra and others; sometimes there are passages or epithets contained in them, which give us a fairly accurate description of these gods and goddesses. Again, the seals which were impressed on the copper-plate records of rulers responsible for issuing those charters often contain the representations of various religious objects which were specially used by different sovereigns as their respective royal insignia (*mudrā*). Thus, the imperial Gupta ruler Samudragupta, who seems to have been a devout worshipper of Viṣṇu, used Garuḍa as his special *rājāṅka* (royal mark or emblem) on his charters, as we know from a passage in the Allahabad pillar inscription (*Garutmadaṅka-svaviṣayabhukti-śāsanayācanādyupāya-sevākṛta*); we know this Garuḍa-emblem being depicted on most of the gold and silver coins of the imperial Guptas. The Pāla rulers of Bengal and Magadha who were *Paramasaugatas*, *i.e.*, devout worshippers of the Buddha, used the symbol representing the preaching of the first sermon by the Master as their royal

[1] Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, pp. 44, 45.

insignia, and we very often find this characteristic scene represented in their various charters. The copper-plate grants of the Sena rulers of Bengal, on the other hand, bear in many cases the figure of the god Sadāśiva who was their patron deity and who was utilised as their royal insignia. Again, on rare occasions, the outlines of the figure of some deity can be found on the uninscribed portion of a particular copper-plate charter; thus, the copper-plate grant of Mahāsāmanta Śrīmad Dommana-Pāla, who was a local ruler of Southern Bengal, contains a very beautiful outline drawing of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu riding on a chariot and his bird Garuḍa on its reverse side; the iconographic details are interesting.[1] Many and various such instances can be cited, which will prove how the extant epigraphic records furnish us with interesting and significant materials for the study of our subject.

The second, though hardly less important, class of materials for the study of our subject is of literary character. These data can be subdivided into various groups. Among them mention may first be made of the general literature of the Indians, both of early and late periods. Their earliest extant literature, the *Ṛgveda*, as I shall show fully in the next chapter, contains some very interesting details, of negative as well as positive character, which will help one to elucidate various points connected with the subject. Not only the general problem of the origin and development of the practice of image-worship among the higher section of the Indo-Aryans is to be discussed on the basis of the evidence supplied to us by this and other early Vedic literature, but also the basic similarity of the later iconographic conceptions of many Hindu deities with the anthropomorphic and sometimes theriomorphic details of their Vedic counterparts is to be emphasised with the help of the early and late Vedic texts. A careful handling of this material will show the significant connection between

[1] The copper-plate grant is in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University. It was discovered in the Sunderbans, and presented to the Asutosh Museum by Mr. Devaprasad Ghosh, its Curator.

the Vedic anthropomorphism and subsequent iconism. Several passages of the early Vedic literature, when read between the lines, will enable us to know something about the peculiar religious practices of the original settlers of India, which will throw light on our subject. The Gṛhya sūtras, the grammatical works of the pre-Christian period, and the dharma- and the artha-śāstras of early date incidentally throw interesting sidelights on this topic. Early literary records of religious systems like Buddhism and Jainism contain incidental references to the religious practices of the Hindus, which will be specially useful for our study. Epic and purāṇic texts of early and late period, are of pre-eminent importance in this connection; the wealth of mythological lore contained in them requires to be very carefully studied, in order that we may interpret the significance of various carvings, frescoes and such other objects. As a thorough acquaintance with the early and late Buddhist records enables a student of the Buddhist iconography to understand the meaning of various carvings belonging to early and late Buddhist art, so the innumerable legends incorporated in the above class of Brahmanical literature will help us to throw clear light on the Brahmanical art of different periods. In fact, the study of the mythology of a people is essential for the understanding of its religious art, and the importance of that class of its literature which is the repository of such mythological materials can never be over-estimated. Again, incidental iconographic descriptions of divine figures contained in many sections of epic and purāṇic literature, as also iconographic and iconometric canons appearing in some of the early and late purāṇas, are of immense value, nay indispensable, for a proper study of our subject. Another class of literature which throws casual light upon some aspects of our subject is the accounts of foreign travellers who make interesting observations on particular religious practices of the people of India.

But the foremost place among the literary data for the study of our subject must be given to the iconographic and iconometric texts which have got a direct bearing on it.

This great mass of literature took centuries to attain its present shape, and some idea about its vastness may be hinted by remarking that what is left to us is only a portion of what was actually composed in course of ages. These canons are really the results of the accumulated experience of generations of artists whose business was to construct these images. The Indians of ancient times possessed a common trait of character, which led them to incorporate their own independent achievements into systems and to merge their own individuality in greater corporate wholes, in order that their own experiences in particular fields of knowledge might have greater authority and sanctity to rest upon. Thus, to refer to one outstanding example in the domain of literary composition, it is a well-known fact that the whole of the present *Mahābhārata* was not composed in one period and by one particular individual. Still, as early as the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., it had attained the character of an epic system, the credit for the elaboration of which was given to a mythical sage, *viz.*, Vyāsa. True it is that some late purāṇic texts like the *Devībhāgavata* allude to not one but as many as twenty-eight Vyāsas;[1] most of these, however, are mythical figures, and it is significant to note that the work in its characteristic manner actually refers to a system or institution typified by the mythical sage Vyāsa who, under different names and as different incarnations of Viṣṇu in 28 successive *dvāpara* ages, was responsible for the composition of the Vedas, Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas, etc. In fact, the word *vyāsa* primarily means arranger or compiler, and in a secondary sense it means explainer or expounder. Similarly, as regards the iconographic and iconometric texts, it must be observed that attempts were made to systematise this floating mass of canons which were the direct outcome of the activities of the image-making artists themselves and were passed off in the names of such mythical sages as some of the seven ṛṣis, like Bhṛgu, Atri and Vaśiṣṭha, or

[1] *Devībhāgavatam*, Vangavasi Edition, Bk. I, Chapter 3, verses 26-33. Some of these names such as Svayambhū, Prajāpati, Uśanas, Bṛhaspati, Savitṛ, Yama, Maghavan, Vaśiṣṭha, Sārasvata and others are significant.

legendary artists like Viśvakarmā and Maya.[1] The *Matsya-purāṇa* refers to eighteen expounders of the *Vāstuśāstras*, among whom mention may be made of Vaśiṣṭha, Viśvakarmā, Maya, Nagnajit, Garga and Bṛhaspati.[2] The *Mānasāra* (to be noticed later) mentions as many as 32 expounders of this subject, the list here containing additional names such as Manu, Nala, Mānasāra, Mānabodha and others; that the list is a corrupt one can be proved by the fact that in some cases there is difficulty in understanding whether the names are of persons or titles of works, while in others we find a name and its various synonyms being utilised to enlarge it. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (LII, 1) tells us that the knowledge of the *Vāstuśāstras* came to be imparted through generations of artists from Brahmā, the creator (*Vāstujñānamathātaḥ Kamalabhavānmuniparamparāyātam*), and Utpala, while commenting on it, says that the word ' sages ' refers to Garga and others (*Kamalabhavād Brahmaṇaḥ sakāśānmunīnāṃ Gargādīnāṃ yat pāramparyeṇa yātaṃ prāptamiti*). The *Mānasāra* further elaborates the tradition and gives a mythical account of the origin of the various kinds of artists (*śilpin*) in its section cf *Śilpilakṣaṇa*. Brahmā, the creator by the grace of Śiva, is the Mahāviśvakarmā; his four faces are named Viśvabhū (the eastern), Viśvavid (the southern), Viśvastha (the northern) and Viśvasraṣṭā (the western); from the east face was born Viśvakarmā, from the south Maya, from the north face Tvaṣṭā, and from the west Manu; Viśvakarmā, Maya, Tvaṣṭā and Manu married the respective daughters of Indra, Surendra, Vaiśravaṇa and Nala and became the fathers of Sthapati (architect), Sūtragrāhī (the draughtsman-designer), Varddhaki (well-versed in the law of proportions,

[1] The names of these Sapta Ṛṣis are invoked in various connections. They were the same as the Citra-Śikhaṇḍins who were the earliest and best promulgators of the Bhāgavata lore according to the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata*.

[2] *Matsya-purāṇam*, Vangavasi Edition, Ch. 252, verses 2-4 :—

Bhṛguratrirvaśiṣṭhaśca Viśvakarmā Mayastathā
Nārado Nagnajiccaiva Viśālākṣaḥ Purandaraḥ ‖
Brahmā Kumāro Nandīśaḥ Saunako Garga eva ca
Vāsudevo'niruddhaśca tathā Śukra-Bṛhaspati
Aṣṭādaśaite vikhyātā Vāstuśāstropadeśakāḥ ‖

the painter) and Takṣaka (the engraver, the stone-mason, etc.), respectively. Of these four, the position of the first, *i.e.*, the Sthapati, was the most important, and he was the teacher of the other three; the next in point of importance was Sūtragrāhī who was the preceptor of the remaining two, and so on. The first was well-versed in all the śāstras, the Sūtragrāhī in draughtsmanship, the Varddhaki in the rules of proportions (*mānakarmajña*) and the Takṣaka was an adept in chiselling and engraving.[1] The very name Sthapati shows that he was fit for founding everything (*sthāpanāyārhaḥ*), and as he was *sthāpanādhipati*, so he was called Sthapati; Sūtragrāhī and others always worked carefully under his orders and according to rules laid down in the *Vāstuśāstras*. There are four orders of śilpīs, *viz.*, Sthapati and the other three; of these the first is characterised by the signs of an *ācārya*, the second is well-informed about *śruti*, the lines and the śāstras, the third is the possessor of good judgment, versed in the *śrutis* and *citrakarma* (work of painting, etc.), while the last, that is, Takṣaka, is adept in his work, cultured, *balabandhu*[2] and merciful. The *śrutiśāstra* (treatises about *śilpa*, *māna*, etc.) should be full of all details (*sarvalakṣaṇam*), and that cannot be acquired in this world by anybody without the help of an artist or a preceptor (*vinā śilpi vinā gurum*); as the knowledge of this *śāstra* is unobtainable without the aid of a śilpin, it should be learnt from him. If the knowledge thus acquired is not put to any use, (its possessor) attains neither enjoyment nor salvation. The above, a free translation of *Mānasāra* (Acharya's edition), pp. 3-4, verses 1-19, shows how the author systematises the tradition about the origin and evolution of art through some mythical names, making it contemporaneous with creation itself. The other interesting point to be noted here is the relative importance which is

[1] Acharya, *Mānasāra*, Chapter 2, vv. 5-9; on other occasions the author refers to his predecessors; Ch. 1, v. 2; Ch. 70, v. 58.

[2] The word *balabandhu* has not been translated by me. In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* Balabandhu is the name of one of the sons of Manu Raivata; in the *Vāyu Purāna*, a son of Bhrgu in the 10th Dvāpara is known by the same name.

assigned by the writer to the four different orders of artists and the highest position allocated to the architect. Scholars have always observed how the architectural art was the most important branch of all arts in ancient and mediaeval India; thus Grünwedel remarks, "The sculpture of ancient India . . . remained simply decorative and always connected with architecture" (*Buddhist Art*, pp. 1-2). Coomaraswamy says, "In the Gupta period the image has taken its place in architecture; becoming necessary, it loses its importance, and enters into the general decorative scheme, and in this integration acquires delicacy and repose" (*HIIA*, p. 71). In the above passages from *Mānasāra* we have a textual corroboration of what was known from a careful study of the ancient and mediaeval Indian art forms. It is to be noted, however, that in later period the art of sculpture asserted itself to a great extent. Resting as before on architectural art for its greater display, it became so profuse and abundant that it tended to smother and overshadow the lines and forms in architecture. This tendency is amply illustrated in the mediaeval temples of Abu and other places.

The *Vāstuśāstra* or the science of architecture and allied arts is dwelt upon in the *Matsya-purāṇa* just prior to its treatment of the iconographic and iconometric canons, and the names of some expounders are similar to those of a few of the reputed authors of treatises on *Pratimālakṣaṇa* and *Citralakṣaṇa*. Thus, Varāhamihira, in Chapter 57 of his *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Sudhakar Dvivedi's edition), while dealing with the characteristic signs of images and their measurements, incidentally refers to a few other writers on this subject like Nagnajit and Vaśiṣṭha who, as we have seen above, are included among the 18 Vāstuśāstropadeśakas. Nagnajit has been cited by him twice and Vaśiṣṭha once and Bhaṭṭa Utpala, the commentator of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, actually quotes passages from the works of these two previous writers in support of his author. This proves that, however mythical might be the nature of these names, śilpa treatises actually passed current in their names at a comparatively early period; otherwise Utpala, who flourished

in the tenth century A.D., could not have quoted passages from them. The art treatise, entitled *Citralakṣaṇa* (now to be had only in its Tibetan version—its Sanskrit original not being available), which has been edited by Laufer, is ascribed to this Nagnajit; it, as has been remarked by the learned editor, is sometimes referred to as *Nagnajiccitralakṣaṇam* or simply as *Nagnavratam*. Nagnajit was probably also the author of a work, *Pratimālakṣaṇa* by name. While commenting on verse 15 of Chapter 57 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the first line of which runs, "*Āsyaṃ sakeśanicayaṃ ṣoḍaśa dairghyeṇa Nagnajitproktaṃ*," Utpala makes this interesting comment, "*Nagnajitproktaṃ Pratimālakṣaṇe āsyaṃ mukhaṃ sakeśanicayaṃ ṣoḍaśāṅgulāni*"; or this *Pratimālakṣaṇa* might have been simply a section of his other work just mentioned. Further, there were other such works passing current in the names of such mythical sages as Kāśyapa and Agastya, or legendary artists like Viśvakarmā and Maya. Utpala quotes extensively from Kāśyapa in his commentary, while many iconographic and iconometric texts passing current in the south pass in the names of both these mythical sages. The śilpaśāstra ascribed to Kāśyapa is called the *Kāśyapīya*, known also as the *Aṃśumadbheda* (or rather forming a part of the *Aṃśumadbheda*).[1] Agastya is the reputed author of the work entitled *Sakalādhikāra* about which Ram Raz makes this interesting observation: "the portion of the work which has as yet come under my own observation, is exclusively on the subject of sculpture as connected with the formation of statues; but it is so diffuse that if we suppose the whole work to be written in a similar style it must considerably exceed the volume of *Mānasāra*, the largest at present of my collection".[2] A large volume of texts dealing with architecture and allied arts passing current in the name of Maya and edited by T. Ganapati Sastri in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series fully justifies the remarks made above. Many other texts like *Viśvakarmāvatāraśāstra*

[1] It has been edited in the Anandasram Sanskrit Series, Poona.
[2] Ram Raz, *Essay on the Architecture of the Hindus*, p. 8.

contain ample materials for the study of this subject, and Gopinath Rao rendered a first-rate service to all its students by partially editing relevant portions of them as appendices to his monumental work on Hindu Iconography, when many of them had not been published. Mention may be made here of many other *śilpa* works, most of which have not yet been edited, while others are known only from quotations in various known *śilpa* treatises. Acharya mentions *Sanatkumāra Vāstuśāstra*, which is known to exist in manuscripts mostly fragmentary. The author of this text owns his indebtedness to *Pūrvācāryas* like Candra, Yama, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, Vyāsa, Manu and others. A *Sārasvatīya-śilpaśāstra* is referred to in Aufrecht's *Catalogus Catalogorum* (Vol. I, p. 714). Hemādri quotes from one *Aparājita-pṛcchā* which may be the same as *Aparājita-vāstuśāstra* attributed to Viśvakarmā, one of the 18 authors mentioned above.[1] Extensive anthological works containing texts on architecture, iconography (dealing with the construction of images belonging not only to Brahmanical Hinduism but also to the rival creeds of Buddhism and Jainism), iconometry, and the allied arts of bronze-casting and painting were composed, and mention can be made of one such work, *viz.*, *Mānasāra*, referred to above, which has been already edited by P. K. Acharya. The name of another such work, though in a less comprehensive scale, can be alluded to here, and it has been edited in the Gaekwad Oriental Series; this is *Mānasollāsa*, which is itself a part of *Abhilaṣitārthacintāmaṇi*, a bigger anthology dealing with various topics, said to have been compiled by the Cālukya king Someśvaradeva who flourished in the 12th century A.D. King Bhoja of

[1] *Devatāmūrti-prakaraṇam*, Introduction, pp. 12-15. The writer of the introduction refers to numbers of other texts whose śilpa character cannot be definitely demonstrated. Ram Raz's remarks on the *śilpaśāstras* of the Hindus are worth quoting in this connection: "It is true that the Hindus were in possession of numerous treatises on architecture, sculpture, etc., which collectively are called the *Silpaśāstra* but unfortunately few traces of them remain. There appears to have been, according to some, 32 and according to others 64, standard treatises on the above-mentioned arts. In a series of memorial verses prescribed among the artists are recorded the names of the authors or titles of the above-mentioned 64 treatises. Of these 32 are *mukhya*, the others are *upa* or subordinate."

Dhara, who flourished a century earlier, is the reputed author of the *Samarāṅgana-sūtradhara*, a work mainly on architecture. Extensive collections of such and other allied texts have been edited by Ganapati Sastri in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, and they are entitled *Mayamata* of Mayamuni (already mentioned) and *Śilparatna* of Śrīkumāra which were originally written in Malayalam script.

But, in most cases the original sources of these anthologies on religious art are to be sought in the numbers of Saṃhitās, Āgamas and Tantras, associated with one or other of the principal Brahmanical sects. These religious treatises, belonging to the Pāñcarātra (Vaiṣṇava) and Śaiva systems, are usually divided into four parts, technically known as pādas, each of which deals with one or other of the topics, *viz.*, Caryā, Kriyā, Yoga and Jñāna. The first part dealt with the rules of conduct to be adopted and actions to be performed by the individual aspirant after salvation; the second one, with the varieties of 'making', which meant everything connected with the construction of temples and images; the third, with concentration; all three of which, if properly and systematically worked out, would lead to the attainment of true knowledge, the resultant of which would be salvation. We are here concerned with the second part, *viz.*, *kriyāpāda*, which is admittedly one of the most important and voluminous sections of these sectarian treatises. Schrader rightly remarks, "Very few Saṃhitās (Pāñcarātra) seem to have actually consisted of these four sections:...The proportion of interest shown for each of the four branches seems to be well illustrated by *Pādma Tantra* in the edition of which the Jñānapāda occupies 45 pages, the Yogapāda 11 pages, the Kriyāpāda 215 pages and the Caryāpāda 376 pages. The practical part, Kriyā and Caryā, is the favourite subject, the rest being treated as a rule by way of introduction or digression."[1] Thus, many of the Pāñcarātra and Śaiva Saṃhitās and Āgamas came to contain important sections dealing with elaborate rules about the construction of

[1] Schrader, *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*, p. 22.

temples and images which were regarded as practical guides by numbers of sectarian devotees. This class of literature may conveniently be compared with portions of the Brāhmaṇa literature which were principally concerned with laying down meticulously details for the correct performance of different Vedic sacrifices. Gopinath Rao mainly drew from the Kriyāpāda of the Pāñcarātra *Vaikhānasāgama* in order to explain the various characteristic features of the Vaiṣṇava images in his work, and he utilised the relevant sections of such Śaiva Āgamas as *Suprabheda*, *Kiraṇa*, *Kāmika* and *Aṃśumadbheda*, for throwing light on the Śaiva icons. The *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*, not yet critically edited, contains very elaborate details of this nature. A full and critical edition of this work will throw a flood of light on the different branches of Brahmanical Hindu Iconography.

Reference has already been made to the Purāṇic literature, a study of which is essential for proficiency in Brahmanical Iconography. It is not only the mythological lore contained in them which is indispensable for a thorough acquaintance with our subject, but indispensable is also the multitude of iconographic and iconometric canons found in such Purāṇas and Upapurāṇas of early and late periods as *Matsya*, *Agni*, *Padma*, *Viṣṇudharmottara*, etc. Many of these Purāṇas, though they profess generally to deal with the five principal topics of Purāṇic lore, namely, *sarga*, *pratisarga*, *vaṃśa*, *manvantara* and *vaṃśānucarita*, associate themselves prominently with one or other of the few principal sects and contain elaborate details about *pratimālakṣaṇa* (sometimes described as *devatārccānukīrtana*), *pratiṣṭhāvidhi* (the exact method of the installation of images), *devagṛhanirmāṇam* (construction of temples), etc. Sometimes, a very close similarity is clearly discernible between one or other of such texts and those of the same nature appearing in the relevant sections of particular Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās; this probably signifies that the former borrowed from the latter or both drew from the same source. Thus, comparison of the chapters on *Bhūparigraha* in connection with the *Pratiṣṭhā* ceremony and

the other chapters on *Pātālayoga*, *Prāsādalakṣaṇam*, *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, etc., of the *Agnipurāṇa* with the similar chapters in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* fully shows that the compiler of this section of the *Agnipurāṇa* condensed much that was in the latter work. It must be said to his credit that he shows his indebtedness to the Pāñcarātra text by introducing his essay with these words, '*Hayaśīrṣaḥ pratiṣṭhārthaṃ devānāṃ Brahmaṇe' bravīt.*'[1] In most cases, these topics are incorporated in the general body of the Purāṇas as replies to the questions of the sages put to Sūta, as most of the other topics in them are introduced. But in rare instances, the usual order is changed . . . . Thus, the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, which contains the fullest details among the Purāṇic literature not only on iconography and iconometry but also on painting and architecture, introduces them by way of questions and answers between the sage Mārkaṇḍeya and the king Vajra (a *sagotra* of Kṛṣṇa and a son of Aniruddha), when the latter is the interlocutor and the former, the expounder. This Upapurāṇa, occasionally given out as a part of the *Garuḍapurāṇa* and quoted repeatedly by Alberuni as the '*Viṣṇudharma*,' is a very useful work of an encyclopaedic character; Section III of it treats of the canons for the construction of temples and images and of the rules for painting, and other fine arts.

Iconographic and iconometric texts were also allotted some place in some authoritative early Indian works on astronomy and Nītiśāstra. Mention has already been made of one chapter in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira which deals with iconography and iconometry; there are two other chapters, one on the installation of images, and the other on the selection of material for the construction of images (Chap. 58, *Vanasampraveśādhyāya*, and Chap. 59, *Pratiṣṭhāvidhi*, in Dvivèdi's edition), which have got an important bearing on studies in Indian Iconology, and which will be discussed in their proper place. All these chapters, with Bhaṭṭa Utpala's valuable commentary on them, are very important for our purpose, because in them we find

[1] This fact has not been noticed by the editor of *Devatāmūrtiprakaraṇam* (Calcutta Sanskrit Series).

iconographic data which can be dated with some certainty. As regards the iconographic matter in the Nītiśāstras, we may refer to the *Śukranītisāra*, Chap. IV, section IV of which is of immense value to all students of the religious art of India.

Of the many and various omnibus works, generally belonging to the category of Smṛtis compiled at a much later date, mention may be made of the *Caturvarga-cintāmaṇi* from the pen of the great compiler Hemādri. The Vratakhaṇḍa of this monumental work contains numerous extracts dealing with the iconographic features of a really formidable host of gods and goddesses belonging to the pantheon of different Brahmanical cults. Hemādri's compilation is extremely interesting and helpful not only from the point of view of its supplying us with such details about less known members of the Hindu pantheon, but also on account of his mentioning almost invariably the sources from which he has quoted. This last fact enables us to compare the extracts with the passage in their original setting, wherever the original source is extant. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, in his *Haribhaktivilāsa*, followed in the lines of Hemādri; but as he was preeminently a Vaiṣṇava, the divinities whose iconographic details he incorporated in his work were chiefly connected with Vaiṣṇavism. The last three vilāsas (18-20) of his book deal with the construction of images, their installation, various rituals connected with them, the building of temples, etc. Like Hemādri he not only quotes from such previous works as the *Matsya*, *Agni*, *Viṣṇudharmottara* and other Purāṇas, but also very frequently utilises the Pāñcarātra text *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*. As the last has not yet been critically edited, extensive quotations from this unpublished work furnish us with materials of an authoritative character, and we can check the readings of the manuscripts of this Pāñcarātra text with the help of these extracts. Another work of such a character is *Tantrasāra* of Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamavāgīśa, which contains extensive quotations from various Tantras like *Rudrayāmala*, *Brahmayāmala*, *Kubjikāmata*, *Śāradātilaka* and others: many of these contain the

dhyānas of Tāntric gods and goddesses, which help to explain their iconographic features.

Several works attributed to Maṇḍana, the son of Śrīkṣetra, both of whom flourished in Mewar during the reign of Mahārāṇā Kumbha, are of great importance in this respect. Maṇḍana, a reputed artist of his age, had his own statue as well as those of his two sons Jaita and Saita carved in relief inside the *dhvaja-stambha* raised under the orders of the said Mahārāṇā, his patron, in honour of the great god Samiddheśvara Śiva whose temple was erected by Rāṇā Mokal near by at Chitorgaḍ. Maṇḍana is said to have composed or compiled several works on art and architecture, two of which are specially connected with our subject. These are *Devatāmūrti-prakaraṇa* and *Rūpamaṇḍana*, both of which have been edited in the Calcutta Sanskrit Series (No. XII). These two texts are evident compilations, the first one mainly drawing from South Indian works like *Mayamata* and *Śilparatna* referred to above; the author of the introduction to this edition has carefully noted the borrowings not only from these but also from such Purāṇas as *Matsya*, *Brahma*, *Padma*, *Skanda* and *Viṣṇudharmottara*, etc., in Chapter of the Introduction. Another interesting fact to be noted in this connection is that, of these two works, Rūpamaṇḍana seems to be the more authoritative one as materials from it were freely utilised in the other text.

Our account of the textual data for the study of the religious art of India will be incomplete, if we fail to refer to the *dhyāna-mantras* of numerous deities, which are incorporated in the work on rituals connected with the well-known cults. Here, a clear distinction can be made between the *dhyānas* of different deities belonging to various Brahmanical cults and the *dhyānas* or *sādhanas* of the deities belonging to the Vajrayāna Buddhism. The difference lay in the manner of meditating on the deity and in fixing the relationship between him and the individual. In the Brahmanical sectarian systems where love and adoration (*bhakti*) of a personal god was the outstanding feature, an element of duality was

present. But a strictly philosophical Vajrayānist emphasised the real unity between the god to be meditated upon and the individual meditating on him; an element of spiritual monism seems to have been present there. This observation can be substantiated by referring to two typical *dhyāna-mantras*, one belonging to sectarian Brahmanism and the other to Vajrayāna Buddhism. One such well-known *mantra* outlines the conception of Śiva thus:—*Dhyāyennityaṃ maheśaṃ rajatagirinibhaṃ cārucandrāvataṃsaṃ | ratnākalpojjvalāṅgaṃ paraśumṛgavarābhītihastaṃ prasannaṃ || padmāsīnaṃ samantāt stutamamaragaṇairvyāghra-kṛttim vasānaṃ | viśvādyaṃ viśvavījaṃ nikhilabhayaharaṃ pañcavaktraṃ trinetram.* We do not fail to find in these lines a clear-cut concept of the god in which his main iconographic features are delineated; it will be needless to add that these followed principally the already established iconographic type of the deity, and the whole *mantra* was a sort of a handy formula for the convenience of the worshipper in meditation. Now, if we compare this with a *sādhana* of any one of the Vajrayāna divinities, we find the difference noticed above. The *sādhana* of Siṃhanāda Lokeśvara, one of the varieties of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, runs thus:—*Ātmānaṃ Siṃhanāda-Lokeśvararūpaṃ bhāvayet, śvetavarṇaṃ trinetraṃ jaṭāmukuṭinaṃ nirbhūṣaṇaṃ vyāghracarmaprāvṛtaṃ siṃhāsanasthaṃ mahārājalīlaṃ candrāsanaṃ candraprabhaṃ bhāvayet. Dakṣiṇe sitaphaṇiveṣṭitaṃ triśūlaṃ śvetaṃ, vāme nānāsugandhikusumaparipūritapadmabhājanaṃ vāmahastāt utthapadmopari jvalatkhaḍgam* (*Sādhanamālā*, Vol. I, p. 63). We can certainly pick out many details of an iconographic character from the above extract, which give a clear-cut outline of the deity (evidently based principally on the Brahmanical god Śiva, *cf.* the *śūla* entwined with snake by his side, the matted locks, the half-moon among them, the tiger skin garment, white colour, the absence of ornaments, etc.); but the distinctive feature lies in the fact that the *sādhaka* meditates on himself as the deity, the portion in the *mantra—ātmānaṃ bhāvayet*, etc., being significant. Sometimes, the *praṇāma-mantra* of

particular deities also contains their iconographic descriptions in broader outlines, which are helpful. Thus, one such in honour of the goddess Śītalā (*Namāmi Śītalāṃ devīṃ rāsabhasthāṃ digambarīm | Mārjjanīkalasopetāṃ sūrpālaṅkṛtamastakām*) leaves little to be added to her iconographic description in her *dhyāna-mantra*. The *stavas*—eulogistic verses sung in honour of respective divinities—also incorporated in them such outlines. But, in all such types of texts, we seldom light upon any new detail which is not already known from earlier typical iconographic texts noticed previously, and thus the importance of the former is of a secondary character in the study of Brahmanical Hindu Iconography. It is not so in the case of the Vajrayāna Buddhist Iconography, and the standard works on it by Foucher or Bhattacharyya prove how much beholden its study is to these *dhyāna-* or *sādhana-mālās*.

It is not an easy task to ascertain the respective dates of the bulk of the iconographic literature referred to above. One can find little difficulty, however, in dating some among them—especially those collected in the works of authors whose dates are otherwise known. Thus, the age of the texts of an iconographic and iconometric character appearing in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* can be definitely fixed in the 6th century A.D., as Kern has very effectively settled the age of the work at that period. Similarly, we can ascertain the dates of the compilations of Hemādri, Maṇḍana and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. Hemādri flourished in the 13th century A.D. and the other two in the 15th century (Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was a contemporary of Śrī-Caitanya, while Maṇḍana, as we have seen above, was the court architect and sculptor of Mahārāṇā Kumbha of Mewar). But we find ourselves in difficulty when we take up the question of the age of those texts which originally formed part of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, the Śaiva Āgamas, the Śākta Tantras and some Purāṇic literature which were the sources of these late compilations. The dates of most of these source books are not definitely known, and it is likely that many of them were composed at different periods, being added to from time to time. Schrader has fixed the

age, the 8th century A.D., by the *terminus ad quem*, in which date possibly some of the most authoritative Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās were composed; he, however, enumerated only a few, about 14 or 15 in number, which belonged to this category.[1] But the few Pāñcarātra texts which contain iconographic and allied matter, for example, the *Hayaśīrṣa* and the *Vaikhānasa*, are impossible to be dated with certainty. Gopinath Rao remarks, on what authority we do not know, that the prose recension of the *Vaikhānasāgama* is perhaps the oldest among the Āgamas of the Vaiṣṇavas, assigning a much later date to the metrical form of the same work. It must be observed here that the descriptions of Viṣṇuite images given in the former tally in a remarkable manner with the extant Vaiṣṇava images of southern India of the 6th to 8th centuries A.D. The latter, *i.e.*, the metrical version of the same work, as it refers to the Drāviḍa-vedas, *i.e.*, the *Prabandhas* of the Ālvārs, cannot certainly be older than the 9th century A.D. But if we compare the iconographic portion of the prose version of *Vaikhānasāgama* with the same of the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*, we are struck by the fact that the latter lays down the general outlines of the various images of Viṣṇu in a much less stereotyped manner than is done by the author of the former. Stereotyped divisions and subdivisions, as many as thirty-six in number, of the *Dhruva-beras* or the immovable images of Viṣṇu, are scrupulously described in the *Vaikhānasāgama*.[2] This would suggest probably a later date for it than the *Hayaśīrṣa*, but we cannot be definite on this point. As for the Śaivāgamas, Gopinath Rao is of opinion that the *Kāmikāgama* is the oldest among them; and as in many of the other ones, including the *Kāraṇāgama*, reference to the Devāram hymns composed by the Nāyanmārs or the

[1] Schrader, *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*, p. 13. He distinguishes between the two types of Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, *viz.*, northern and southern.

[2] *Yoga*, *bhoga*, *vīra* and *abhicārika*, according to the particular kind of result desired by the worshipper; *sthānaka*, *āsana* and *śayana*,—this division being based on the different modes in which the principal figure is shown; lastly, *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*, according to the number of accessory figures in the composition clustering round the central figure. T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 78-80.

Śivabhaktas is to be found, they are to be dated later than the 9th century A.D.[1] The Śākta Tantra works, as we have them at present and which contain iconographic and iconometric data, are mostly much later in date than the 9th or 10th century A.D. None can at all be certain about the respective dates of the Purāṇas, when their heterogeneous character is taken into consideration. We can ascertain, however, their relative age from internal evidence. But a comparison of some of the iconographic texts given in several of the Purāṇas with those given in some of the Pāñcarātra literature will fully prove the indebtedness of the former to the latter (*cf.* my remarks about the borrowing of iconographic matter by the author of the Agnipurāṇa from the *Hayaśīrṣa text*).

A general remark, however, can very justifiably be made with regard to the earlier age limit of most of these canonical texts. If we fix the earlier limit of the oldest among them in the 2nd to the 4th century of the Christian era, we may not be far wrong; but then it is impossible for us to determine which among them are such, and it is a fact that some at least of the iconographic features of many of the Brahmanical divinities were based on the partially defined anthropomorphism or theriomorphism of their Vedic counterparts. This limit did not go further back than the early Gupta period. In a subsequent part of this book, it will be shown that the image-making activities attained a great impetus in the early centuries of the Christian era due to various causes, and images belonging to different creeds came to be made in large numbers. Different groups of artists entrusted with this task put their own experiments into writing not only for their own convenience, but also for the convenience of the generations of artists to follow them, and in this way grew up a vast mass of such texts which were being added to from time to time. Thus, images were first constructed according to the specific needs of the varieties of expanding creeds and then the rules for their making were gradually

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 55-57.

stereotyped; it is just like the evolution of a language and the various grammatical rules appertaining to it. The analogy can be drawn further; as in the case of the grammatical literature of a particular language, development of different schools can be noticed as the language progressed, so here also, with the growth of iconoplastic art in India, different schools of artists came to lay down varying rules for the making of same types of icons. I have already referred to the 18 Vāstuśāstropadeśakas mentioned in the *Matsyapurāṇa* and have also shown how this information is partially corroborated by the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira. I shall here show further how this differentiation can first be noticed on the basis of iconometric texts, and how the name of at least one such school can be ascertained from Utpala's commentary on a passage of Varāhamihira. Thus, Varāhamihira writes with regard to the measurement of the length and breadth of the face of an image in this manner—

Svairaṅgulapramāṇairdvādaśa vistīrṇamāyataṃ ca mukham ।
Nagnajitā tu caturdaśa dairghyeṇa drāviḍaṃ kathitam ॥

Now, Utpala actually quotes from the work of Nagnajit, not available now, the following passage on which the above observation of Varāhamihira was based :—

Vistīrṇaṃ dvādaśa mukhaṃ dairghyeṇa ca caturdaśa ।
Aṅgulāni tathā kāryaṃ tanmānaṃ drāviḍaṃ smṛtam ॥

Nagnajit, here, clearly refers to a school of measurement followed in the making of icons in the Drāviḍa country, and we have seen that Varāhamihira speaks of another school of measurement probably followed in the northern country. Gopinath Rao is quite correct when he says, " The author, Nagnajit, quoted by Varāhamihira, must certainly be older than the middle of the sixth century A.D.; the quotation . . . indicates the existence of a school of sculpture in south India then." But the other remark of his, in this connection, that " the quotation also incidentally informs us that Nagnajit was possibly a Dravidian author on śilpaśāstra " does not

bear scrutiny.[1] Had Nagnajit been really a Dravidian author, it is presumable that he would not have referred to this school particularly as Dravidian, in his *Pratimālakṣaṇa*. We have no means, now, of associating Nagnajit with a particular locality, though Vedic, Epic and Purāṇic tradition refers to one Nagnajit as a king in the Gandhāra region; but this king Nagnajit might have been quite a different person from Nagnajit, the author of the works *Citralakṣaṇa* and *Pratimālakṣaṇa*.

It is necessary here to discuss briefly the question of the universal or regional character of the texts in relation to the images discovered in various localities of India. Gopinath Rao, while discussing this question, makes this general observation, " From the uniformity observable everywhere throughout India in the arrangement, say, of the individual figures belonging to a subject, it is clear that the rules laid down in the Āgamas and Tantras have had a very general application." [2] He further remarks, " The same rules having been obeyed everywhere in the matter of making images, it is no wonder that the same results have been produced by artists belonging to all parts of the country in so far as the art is apt to be bound down by rules." But, are the rules same everywhere, and are the results obtained by the artists of different parts of India always the same? No doubt Rao notes some difference in the images belonging to the various parts of the country; but this, according to him, is " only observable in the outline of the feature and the details of ornamentation." The quotation, "*Deśānurūpabhūṣaṇaveśālaṅkāramūrtibhiḥ kāryā । Pratimā lakṣaṇayuktā sannihitā vṛddhidā bhavati*", from the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira in his support is apt. But in many cases difference lay deeper than that. The treatment of the same type of an image of a divinity can be shown to differ in essential features in widely different regions of India, and variant iconographic texts can be utilised to explain them. It has been shown already how the *Vaikhānas-*

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, p.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

āgama description of the *Dhruva-beras* of Viṣṇu closely tallies with the fairly early Viṣṇuite images of the South. But few are the Viṣṇu images of northern India which can be explained by the same text. In the south Indian images of Viṣṇu, his two invariable attendant consorts (except in the Yoga varieties) are Śridevi and Bhūdevī holding, besides a fly-whisk, a lotus and a blue-lotus respectively ; this characteristic has its textual basis in the *Vaikhānasa*. But the north Indian varieties of Viṣṇu images, on the other hand, have almost invariably Śrī and Puṣṭi or Sarasvatī holding a lotus and a lute in their respective hands ; this particular feature of theirs corresponds to the descriptions of such images given in the *Matsya*, *Agni* and *Kālikā Purāṇas*. The *Matsya* text lays down that Śrī and Puṣṭi holding lotuses should be made by the side of Viṣṇu (*Śrīśca puṣṭiśca kartavye pārśvayoḥ padmasaṃyute* : *Matsya*, 258. 15) ; the *Kālikāpurāṇa* says that Śrī should be made to appear on his right while Sarasvatī on his left (*dadhānaṃ dakṣiṇe devīṃ Śriyaṃ pārśve tu bibhratam । Sarasvatīṃ vāma-pārśve.....*) ; the *Agnipurāṇa* text, however, closely fits with the actual images when it definitely lays down *Śrīpuṣṭī cāpi kartavye padmavīṇākarānvite । Urumātrocchritāyāme... i.e.*, " Śrī and Puṣṭi holding a lotus flower and a lute respectively in their hands and shown up to the thigh of the main image in their height should be carved on either side of the figure of Viṣṇu " (*Agnipurāṇa*, Ch. 44). There can be no doubt that the application of the respective texts mentioned above was regional in character, the three latter texts being followed in the north, and the Vaikhānasa, in the south. We can further substantiate our point by referring to the two varieties of the images of the Sungod—north Indian and south Indian,—and the different iconographic texts describing the Sūrya image. The most important characteristics of a north Indian Sūrya are its *udīcyaveśa* (consisting of the close covering of the body and top-boots of the legs—gradually these features were subdued) and its waist-girdle, the *viyaṅga or avyaṅga* ; these are conspicuous by their absence in the south Indian images of

Sūrya. Now, if we study some relevant iconographic texts descriptive of the sun icons, we find that they also can be classified into two well-defined groups on the basis of the mention or non-mention of the particular iconic features noted above. Of the various texts collected by Gopinath Rao to describe the icons of Sūrya, the *Aṃśumadbheḍāgama*, the *Suprabhedāgama* and the *Śilparatna* do not at all record the features to be found in the Sūrya images of northern India, while the others, *viz.*, the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, *Viśvakarmāvatāra-śāstra*, *Viṣṇudharmottara*, *Matsyapurāṇa*, *Agnipurāṇa*, etc., do so. We can with a great deal of plausibility assign on this basis the former groups of texts to the southern region and the latter group to the northern. The *Pūrvakāraṇāgama*, which is also presumably a southern text, contains passages such as *kañcukāñcitavigraham* and *pādau sakaṭakau tasya* reminiscent of the northern feature and thus seems to be influenced by the latter group of texts. Thus, as a broad division can be made between the Brahmanical images of India into north Indian and south Indian on the basis of important iconographic features, so the texts also can be generally classified into two groups, the one followed in the north and the other in the south. But there can be no denying the fact that sometimes texts belonging to one group showed traces of their contact with those belonging to the other, as undoubtedly varieties of images usually current in one region are occasionally to be found in the other. The *Pūrvakāraṇāgama* has just been shown to have been influenced by the iconographic texts of the north ; similarly, examples can be cited where north Indian texts can be shown to bear south Indian characteristics. This is especially noticeable in the late compilations. Maṇḍana, an artist of Rajputana, draws copiously from both the sources in his works, and in many instances his descriptions of particular images are given in the approved south Indian manner. Thus, the following description of the image of the sun in his *Rūpaṃaṇḍana* : *Sarvalakṣaṇasaṃyuktaṃ sarvābharaṇa-bhūṣitam । Ādityasya tvidaṃ rūpaṃ kuryāt pāpa-praṇāśanam* does not contain the well-known iconographic traits of the

Sūrya images of the north.[1] Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamavāgīśa, a great Tāntric pandit of Bengal, refers to two *dhyāna-mantras* of Sūrya, none of which contains any of the same.[2] The omission of these details in the north Indian compilations may have also another explanation in this particular case; as these were late works, most of the traits which had their basis in the non-Indian motifs were purposefully omitted, a reason which might also have been at the root of such an omission in their earlier prototypes of the south.

While discussing the problem of the correlation between the texts available at present and extant images, a note of caution is necessary. Many indeed are the early and late mediaeval Brahmanical images the iconographic features of which completely tally with the descriptions of the same types of the divinities in particular texts; but there are numerous other images whose features sometimes can only be partially explained, or at other times cannot at all be accounted for, with the help of known iconographic literature Similarly, many and various are the textual descriptions o less known members of the fully-developed pantheon, which now seem to have had no sculptural basis at all. This seemingly anomalous fact can be explained by observing that our knowledge both of the actual images and of the extant texts can on no account be said to be complete and perfect. I have mentioned above that the iconographic literature now obtainable, enormous though it is, is only a portion of its original bulk, and some new sections of it may yet be discovered in course of time. It is also a matter of common knowledge that Brahmanical images which have so far been discovered are comparatively few when we take into account the numbers of images carved in various materials through

[1] *Cf.* the details of the Āditya images given in the *Aṃśumadbheda* and *Suprabheda āgamas* and quoted by Gopinath Rao; *Pratimālakṣaṇāni* (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pt. II, Appendix), pp. 83-84; details of the chariots and seven horses, which are given in these, are omitted in the *Rūpamaṇḍana* description.

[2] Both these *dhyānas* contain descriptions of the four-handed images of Sūrya; two hands hold lotus flowers while the other two are shown in the *abhaya* and *varada* poses. Four-handed Sūrya images, though rare, are not absolutely unknown. Āgamavāgīśa appears to have lived in the 16th or 17th century.

many centuries of the flourishing period of the icon-maker's art in India. Untold numbers of images, many of which were probably priceless works of religious art, were destroyed by the vandalism of iconoclasts and thus irretrievably lost to us. The fault of destroying ancient works of art is not always to be laid at the door of the image-breakers of alien faith actuated by fanatical zeal; persons belonging to the same faith caused intentional damage to them actuated by utilitarian motive. Numerous are the ruins of ancient and mediaeval India, which were being used through the ages by various classes of people for their own building and other purposes. Beautiful works of art in marble, statuaries and architectural pieces from Amarāvatī were burnt down by the local people to supply them with lime to be utilised for their paltry ends. Sometimes, responsible public officials used them in constructions. Innumerable sculptural and architectural pieces from Sarnath, belonging to Brahmanical and Buddhist shrines, were carted away from the site and thrown into the Ganges as mere ballast when the Dufferin Bridge was being built over the river at Banaras.[1] Again, innumerable images were in ancient times made of wood which is extremely perishable in this country; they did not survive for a very long period after their construction. All these facts will have to be taken into consideration for explaining apparent discrepancies between the images and the texts. Occasional discoveries of new types of images sometimes throw interesting light on this point. Gopinath Rao quotes this description of Śivadūtī, one of the numerous forms of the Devī, from the *Matsyapurāṇa* :—

Tathaivārtamukhī śuṣkā śuṣkakāyaviśeṣataḥ
Bahubāhuyutā devi bhujagaiḥ pariveṣṭitā ‖
Kapālamālinī bhīmā tathā khaṭvāṅgadhāriṇī ,
Śivadūtī tu kartavyā śṛgālavadanā śubhā

[1] The river has since restored some of them. A few of the sculptures in the collection of the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, Banaras, were retrieved from the bed of the river near the bridge. Some sculptures of great iconographic interest were found by me in the river-bed, not very far from the site of the bridge.

Ālīḍhāsanasaṃsthānā tathā rājaṃścaturbhujā [1]
Asṛkpātradharā devī khaḍgaśūladharā tathā ||
Caturthastu karastasyāstathā kāryastu sāmiṣaḥ || [1]

A free translation of the text is as follows :—' The auspicious multi-armed goddess Śivadūtī has the face of a jackal; surrounded by snakes, her body is emaciated and face sorrowful; she is fierce-looking, wears a garland of skulls, and holds a *khaṭvāṅga* (for its meaning, see glossary); when she is four-armed, she should be shown in the *ālīḍha* pose and her hands should hold a cup full of blood, a sword, a trident and a fish.' But Rao could not illustrate this description of the goddess with the aid of any extant relief. Now, it was Natesa Aiyar who first drew the attention of scholars to a sculpture in the collection of the Nagpur Museum, which in a remarkable manner coincides with this Purāṇic description. It may be noted here that this sculpture does not conform to the other mode of representing the goddess given in the *Śrītattvanidhi*, where her name is shortened into Dūtī.[2] Among the numerous Devī icons in the Chaunṣaṭ Yoginī temple at Bheraghat, many of which are in an extremely mutilated condition, this particular aspect of the Devī has not yet been recognised. But one interesting fact concerning these, which has special bearing on the topic under discussion, ought to be noted here. Most of these images bear identificatory inscriptions on their pedestals; in a few cases, it is possible to show that the latter (the *pīṭhikā*) did not originally belong to the figure which is placed upon it at present. But in the majority of instances they form an organic whole; and many are the names in the pedestal inscriptions, which cannot be found among the authorised lists of such goddesses in the available texts. No doubt the names of such well-known aspects of the goddess, as Brahmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Vārāhī, Vaiṣṇavī, Caṇḍikā, Ḍākinī Jāhnavī, Yamunā and others are found among them. But

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part II, *Pratimālakṣaṇāni*, p. 125.

[2] Natesa Aiyar, *Catalogue of Archaeological Exhibits in the Nagpur Museum*. When I went to Nagpur (Dec., 1950), I could not see the image.

we are yet to get hold of iconographic texts which will give us the descriptions of such figures as Deḍḍarī, Lampaṭā, Ṭhānī, Ṭakārī, Riḍhālī, Ṣaṇḍinī, Auḍārā, Khemakhī, and a host of others. Again, it is interesting to note that some figures among them, easily recognisable from their iconography, such as Mahiṣāsuramarddinī and Gaṇeśānī (Śakti of Gaṇeśa), are respectively labelled as Terambā and Aiṅginī.[1] Evidently, the sculptors of these images were following the texts current in this region (which are not now available) to meet the requirements of the Śākta devotee who was the original builder of this temple rebuilt by Queen Alhaṇādevī during the reign of her son Narasiṃhadeva in the Kalachuri-Chedi year 907 (1155 A.D.).

[1] For a detailed description of these goddesses with or without inscriptions, refer to R. D. Banerjee's *The Haihayas of Tripuri and their Monuments*, pp. 79-90. The Ranod inscription (Gwalior State) of the 10th or 11th century A.D. mentions the name of Terambipāla, a Śaiva ascetic of the Mattamayūra clan; it means literally " the protector of Terambi ", or, " protected by Terambi ". Terambā and Terambi both seem to signify the goddess Durgā in one of her aspects.

CHAPTER II

The Antiquity of Image-Worship in India

It has already been pointed out in the introductory chapter that the term *icon* (derived from Greek *eikon*) signifies an object of worship, or something which is associated with the rituals relating to the cults of different divinities. The English word ' image,' derived from old French and Latin ' imago,' on the other hand, has got the basic connotation of ' likeness ' ; from this it came to be used in the sense underlying the Greek word mentioned above. Image in its primary sense has its close parallel in such Indian words as *pratikṛti*, *pratimā*, *vimba*, etc., which again like their English counterpart came to acquire the secondary significance. The word *vimba* means reflection, and it is very frequently used in the sense of the images of divinities. There is a common custom adhered to in Bengal at the time of the annual autumnal worship of the clay images of the goddess Durgā ; it consists in placing a mirror on a brass or copper bowl in front of the deity in such a manner that the image is reflected in the mirror. The water for bathing the deity (*snāna-jala*) is poured on the reflection there, and thus the bathing of the image is done. This practice thus emphasises the true significance of the word *vimba* ; it is also necessary from the practical point of view.[1]

[1] Water cannot be poured on the clay image with its coating of paint and other tinsel ornaments without damaging the whole object of worship. In southern India, substitute images, known as *snapanaberas* (*i.e.*, images meant for bathing), are made, usually of bronze, and regularly bathed in place of the principal image in the sanctum. But in the case of the Śiva-liṅgas, no such intermediary is usually needed, for they are not generally coated with daubs of paint and decorated with ornaments. They are, only occasionally (once at night), endowed with various ornaments and garlands (*śṛṅgāraveśa*), and this is done long after the bathing is over. Sometimes, gold leaves in the shape of a crescent (*śaśāṅka*), three eyes or the third eye (*trinetra*), etc., are permanently inset into the *pūjābhāga* of the Liṅga.

Even when such words as *vimba*, *pratikṛti*, etc., came to be used in their secondary sense, they retained their former usage in comparatively late texts. In the *Pratimā-nāṭaka* of Bhāsa, mention is made of the statues (*pratimā*) of the departed royalties, which, though objects of respect, were not certainly meant for regular worship. The iron figure of Bhīma, which was crushed by the blind old Kuru king Dhṛtarāṣṭra by being hugged close to his body, is described by Kṛṣṇa as ' *āyasī pratimā* '.[1] The golden image of Sītā served as her substitute during the performance of the Aśvamedha sacrifice by Rāma, when she herself was in exile in Vālmīki's hermitage.[2] The word *pratikṛti* meaning 'likeness' occurs in the *Sūtra* (V. 3.96) of Pāṇini, which reads *ive pratikṛtau* and which can be explained thus,—the affix *kan* means also ' like this,' ' in imitation of this,' when imitation or likeness of a person or thing is meant. That images of human beings were made in ancient India is fully proved by many other texts, one of which may be mentioned here. The *Śukranītisāra* says that "images of divinities, even if they are without the characteristic signs, are beneficial to men ; those of mortals, on the other hand, even if they are endowed with them, are never so."[3] The free-standing sculptures discovered in Patna and Parkham were identified by K. P. Jayaswal as royal statuaries of the Śaiśunāga dynasty ; few scholars, if any, accept this suggestion now, and they are almost unanimously described as Yakṣa figures. But numerous references to images of kings and great men are to be found in Indian literature, which, though of special veneration, were certainly not objects of worship. The red

[1] *'Mā śuco Dhṛtarāṣṭra tvaṃ naiṣa Bhīmastvayā hataḥ* ।
Āyasī pratimā hyeṣā tvayā rājanvipātitā !
Mahābhārata, Strīparva, Ch. 12, v. 23.

[2] *Kāñcanīṃ mama patnīṃ ca dīkṣāyajñāṃśca karmāṇi* ।
Agrato Bharataḥ kṛtvā gacchatvagre mahāyaśāḥ ॥
Rāmāyaṇa, Uttarakāṇḍa, Ch. 91, v. 25.
Some such word like *pratimā*, *pratikṛti* or *vimba* is to be understood here, though none of them is expressly mentioned.

[3] IV. 4, 36 : *Api śreyaskaraṃ nṛṇāṃ devavimbamalakṣaṇam* ।
Salakṣaṇaṃ martyavimbaṃ na hi śreyaskaraṃ sadā ॥
The use of the word *vimba* should be noted.

sandstone sculptures representing some of the Kushan kings like Wema Kadphises and Kanishka and the Saka satrap Caṣṭana discovered near Mathura are a few of the extant figures testifying to the prevailing practice in those remote times. The Kushan emperors no doubt assumed some amount of divine character which is borne out by their adoption of the title *devaputra* (possibly in imitation of the Chinese royal practice), by such features as ' a halo round the head', flames issuing from the shoulders, ' the royal bust rising from the clouds ', etc., characterising their portraits appearing on coins, and by the glorious title such as *Iśvara* used by one of them, *viz.*, Wema Kadphises in his coin legends.[1] Still it must be wrong to suppose that their figures commanded the same amount of religious fervour culminating in their ritualistic worship with deep devotion as was roused by the images of the cult-deities which had much earlier made their appearance in India. These royal statuaries were in all probability housed in structures of a funerary character and regarded by their living relations and subjects with great veneration, just as pictorial representations and statues of mediaeval and modern Rajput kings and potentates used to be enshrined in *chatris* or funerary monuments and highly venerated; but, the service and attention offered to them must have been done through the media of divine images which were the objects of proper veneration, as was the custom and is still the custom with the Rajput kings. In the case of the latter, the phallic emblems of Śiva usually served this purpose. Under no circumstances, however, could they have enjoyed the same position as was done by the images of cult deities, some of whom, as we shall see later on, were apotheosised human beings.

[1] Antiochus IV, the Seleucid king of Syria, describes himself in some of his coin legends as *Theou Epiphanous* (*Basileos Antiochou Theou Epiphanous*, *i.e.*, ' Of king Antiochus the God Manifest'). He identified himself with the great Greek god Olympian Zeus, and on some of his coins the head of Zeus shows his own features. He went much further than Alexander the Great who regarded himself as the son of Zeus; he even married Atargatis, the great Goddess of northern Syria. For all these ostentatious claims to divinity, however, he was regarded by the subsequent historians as vain, silly and theatrical.

Words like *sandṛś*, *pratimā*, etc., might have signified from a comparatively early date symbolical representations of divinities which were not associated with particular cults; such use, in fact, can be found in texts assignable to a period when the cult gods and goddesses had either not made their appearance, or, even if they had done so, had not been assigned any important position in the religious lives of the higher sections of the Indo-Aryans. Thus, the word *sandṛś* occurs in the *Kāṭhaka Upaniṣad*, II. 3, 9—" he has no form visible to the eye; no one sees him with the eye." [1] The word ' *sandṛśe* ' has been explained by Saṁkarācārya as ' *sandarśanaviṣaye* ', *i.e.*, ' objects visible to the eye '. It has been interpreted as ' images proper ' by some scholars; but the utmost that it can signify is some sort of sensible representation which could symbolise the god. The same sense is possibly recorded by the word *pratimā* in verse 19, Chapter IV, of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, which says that " there is no image of him whose name is great glory." [2] The word *pratimā* occurs in a verse of the tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda* in which the hymnist asks about the measure and the image of the sacrifice; he answers his own question in the next verse that the symbol of the sacrifice was the sacrificial fire itself. There is very little justification for taking it here in the sense of the image proper of gods.[3]

The words *pratikṛti*, *pratimā*, etc., came to denote *arccā*, *i.e.*, objects of regular worship in course of time. It appears that the former had attained the significance as early as the time of Pāṇini. *Pratikṛti*, in the sense of likeness, has already been noticed in one of his *sūtras* in the fifth *adhyāya* (V. 3, 96); another *sūtra* under it, *viz.*, V. 3, 99—*jīvikārthe cāpaṇye*, refers to certain *pratikṛtis* which are *jīvikārtha* as well as *apaṇya*. On the authority

[1] *Na sandṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpamasya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam*: This part is retained without any alteration in the first half of verse 20, in the fourth chapter of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*.

[2] *Na tasya pratimā asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*: but the word here may more probably mean ' comparison '.

[3] *R. V.*, x, 130, 3.

of the commentaries like the *Mahābhāṣya* and the *Kāśikā* we can assume that these objects which were meant for livelihood (*jīvikārtha*) but at the same time were not for sale (*apaṇya*) were really the images of gods which were highly venerated by some people of his time. The *sūtra* has been explained thus in the latter, " That which is bought and sold is called *paṇya*; that which is not so dealt with is *apaṇya*. The rule applies to the images of gods which are made means of subsistence by a low order of Brahmans, not by selling them but by exhibiting them from door to door." [1] These images were undoubtedly important as objects of worship, otherwise people would not give alms to their bearers and exhibitors. It will be proved in a subsequent section of this book that the practice of worshipping some divinities had already made its appearance in the time of Pāṇini. Patañjali uses the very word *arccā* in his *Mahābhāṣya* while commenting on the above-mentioned *sūtra* of Pāṇini. He says that the Mauryas had images of gods (*arccā*) made for obtaining gold (*Mauryairhiraṇyārthibhiḥ arccā prakalpitā*). In the sectarian literature of later times, this word is very frequently used along with the earlier ones noticed above as well as such terms as *vapuḥ, tanu, vigraha, rūpa, bera*, etc., which denoted that these objects of worship were not mere symbolical representations of the particular gods and goddesses, but were their very bodies and forms.

The above discussion shows that some of the Indian words for image had different connotations according to their appearance in texts of early or late dates and according to their use in particular contexts. Iconography as a subject for study is chiefly concerned with images or icons having the third significance just delineated, and their accessories. It has very little to do with mere symbols or symbolic representations of gods, whether they are anthropomorphic or theriomorphic. This point will have to be particularly borne in mind while determining the question of the antiquity

[1] *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, Srischandra Vasu's Edition p. 975.

of image-worship in India in connection with the preliminary considerations regarding our subject. This discussion has gained some new orientation since the discovery of many objects, seals with representations of human and animal figures and pictographs on them, numerous terracotta figurines and a few fragmentary stone sculptures, in course of the excavations of the prehistoric sites in the Indus Valley. Marshall has discussed the nature of many aniconic objects, usually of stone, more or less realistically modelled as phalli, a large number of which have been discovered there; he is of opinion that their ostensible use seems to have been as cult objects. Further notice of these will be taken in connection with the interpretation of the Ṛgvedic epithet *Śiśnadeva* and the evolution of phallicism in India. The three-headed horned figure, represented as seated in a particular yogic *āsana* (it greatly corresponds to the *kūrmāsana* of later times in which the heels are placed crosswise under the gluteals), surrounded by such animals as a rhinoceros, a water-buffalo, an elephant and a tiger and crude representations of men, appearing on a seal, has been described by Marshall as the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati of subsequent days. Another seal bears on it a seated human figure having on either side a half-kneeling figure in respectful attitude, above whom a snake is shown with its hood spread; the attitude of the flanking figurines in this seal, even though their hands may not be in the *añjali* pose, distinctly reminds us of the pose in which the attendants of the cult deities are shown in the later sectarian art of India. " Three more seals bear on them representations of nude tree gods standing erect with arms hanging on sides like the images of the Jinas in the *kāyotsarga* posture and each attended by a half-kneeling votary above whom a serpent spreads its head." On the basis of the above data, R. P. Chanda observes, " The excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro have brought to light ample evidence to show that the worship of images of human and superhuman beings in Yoga postures, both seated and standing, prevailed in the Indus Valley in the Chalcolithic period." [1] But

[1] R. P. Chanda, *Mediaeval Indian Sculptures in the British Museum*, p. 9.

whether these and such others appearing on a few more seals of this type can be regarded as definite representations of cult-objects cannot be determined with certainty so long as we are unable to unravel the mystery of the script and language of the highly cultured people of the Indus Valley. Similarly, many of the numerous terracotta figurines, unearthed there in course of excavations and tentatively described by Mackay as images of household gods, are very difficult of correct interpretation at the present state of our knowledge.[1] Similar difficulty confronts us with regard to the definite explanation of the character of a few of the neolithic finds in India which have been described by some scholars as cult objects. The metal manikin of crude design in the collection of the pre-historic objects in the Indian Museum may or may not represent such a specimen.[2]

The nature of the prehistoric remains just discussed cannot be determined with certainty on account of the absence of any literary data throwing clear light on them; but with the help of certain passages occurring in the *Ṛgveda*, the earliest extant literature of the Indo-Aryans, it is possible to offer a tentative explanation about some of them. It may be observed, however, that in India, prior to the advent of the Aryans, image-worship might have been practised by her original settlers. But it is still a matter of doubt and controversy when this was first introduced among the Aryans who migrated into India. From the beginning of the scientific method of Vedic studies in India this question engaged the attention of scholars. The question, "Did the Vedic Indians make images of their gods?", was answered in the negative by Max Müller. He said, "The religion of the Vedas knows no idols. The worship of idols in India is a secondary formation, a later degradation of the more primitive

[1] For the stone Phalli, read Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilisation*, Vol. I, p. 59. For two figures on the seals noticed above, *cf.* Marshall, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 52; Pl. XII, Figs. 13-14, 18-19, 22. For Mackay's interpretation of the terracotta figurines, *cf.* Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro*, Vol. I, pp. 258-59.

[2] *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 614; Pl. X, Fig. 17.

worship of ideal gods."[1] H. H. Wilson, in his preface to *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (p. ii), remarks that "the worship of the Vedas is for the most part domestic worship, consisting of prayers and oblations offered, in their own houses, not in temples, by individuals for individual good and addressed to unreal presences, not to visible types. In a word, the religion of the Vedas was not idolatry." Macdonell has discussed the question further and suggested that image-worship was not known to the Indians of the early Vedic period. He observes, "The physical appearance of the gods is anthropomorphic, though only in a shadowy manner; for it often represents only aspects of their natural bases figuratively described to illustrate their activities. . . . The arms of the sun are simply his rays, and his eye is intended to represent his physical aspect. The tongue and limbs of Agni merely denote his flames. The fingers of Trita are referred to only in order to illustrate his character as a preparer of Soma, and the belly of Indra only to emphasise his powers of drinking Soma. Two or three gods are spoken of as having or assuming all forms. It is easy to understand that in the case of deities whose outward shape was so vaguely conceived and whose connection with natural phenomena was in many instances still clear, no mention of either images or temples is found in the *Ṛgveda*."[2] This long extract very accurately sums up the view-point of those scholars who would answer the question under discussion in the negative.

But, quite an opposite view is expressed by others who, on the basis of some passages in the *Ṛgveda*, suggested that the practice of making images was well known among the early Vedic Indo-Aryans. The descriptions of many of the divinities given in various hymns, which have been explained away as cases of vague and uncertain anthropomorphism by Macdonell and others, have been made much of by their opponents who find in them definite allusion to images. Bollensen says that from the common appellation of the gods

[1] Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 38.

[2] Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 17-18. Refer also for his views to *J.R.A.S.*, LVII, 1909, p. 817.

as ' *divo naras*', *i.e.*, men of the sky, or simply as *naras*, *i.e.*, men, and from the epithet ' *nṛpeśas*', *i.e.*, ' having the form of men ' (*R. V.*, III. 4, 5), we may conclude that the Indians did not merely in imagination assign human forms to their gods, but also represented them in a sensible manner. The passage in the *Ṛgveda* (II. 33, 9) describes a painted image of Rudra in this manner, " with strong limbs, many-formed, awful brown, he is painted with shining golden colours " (*Sthirebhiraṅgaiḥ pururūpa ugro babhruḥ śukrebhiḥ pipiśe hiraṇyaiḥ*) ; an image of Varuṇa is described thus, " wearing a golden coat of mail, he veils himself in his radiance ; spies sit around him " (*R. V.*, I. 25, 13 : *vibhraddrāpiṃ hiraṇyayaṃ varuṇo vasta nirṇijam* l *pari spaśo niṣedire*) ; the Maruts appear to be distinguished from their ' gods ', *i.e.*, images, in the *Rgveda* (V. 52, 15), where the hymnist says, " we now pray to the gods of these (Maruts) so as to get to them (*nū manvāna eṣāṃ devāñ acchā*) ; then such commonly found expressions as *vapuḥ*, *tanu*, *rūpa*, etc., used in connection with some of the Vedic gods, have particular reference to their images : the word *sandṛś*, found in some Vedic texts, is one of the oldest expressions most probably denoting an image. Thus argued Bollensen in support of his contention that the images played a very prominent part in the religious practice of the early Vedic Indo-Aryans.[1] S. V. Venkateswara, another exponent of this view, went still further and adduced more textual evidence in its support. While he was engaged in a controversy with Macdonell about the development of early Hindu iconography, carried on in the pages of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1916, 1917 and 1918, he mentioned, among others, the following passages which contained according to him definite reference to the images of the gods : *R. V.*, I. 21, 2—*Indrāgnī śumbhatā naraḥ* (men decorate Indra and Agni) ; *R. V.*, VIII. 69, 12—*sūrmyaṃ suṣirāmiva* (like a hollow tube; Ballantyne has rendered this passage as ' a beautiful perforated iron image,' *cf.* his *Mahābhāṣya*) ; Indra is referred to in many

[1] Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. V, pp. 453-54.

Ṛgvedic passages as *suśipra* (having beautiful cheeks and jaws), Rudra as *kapardin* (wearing braided coil of hair), Vāyu as *darśata* (striking to the eye, beautiful) ; *R. V.*, IV. 58, 3—*catvāri śṛṅgā trayo asya pādā dve śīrṣe sapta hastāso asya* (he has four horns, three feet, two heads and seven hands).[1] But after a long controversy with Macdonell on this as well as other matters relating to the subject, Venkateswara was then of opinion that the Vedic evidence was not at all sufficient for deciding whether gods were iconically represented in the early Vedic period or not. In a later contribution (*Rūpam*, Nos. 42-4, 1930), he was more definite, and he collected numerous additional passages from the *Ṛgveda* and other Vedas in support of his view ; he even used the term iconography in relation to the representation of the Vedic deities. He assigned the foremost place to the well-known verse in the *Ṛgveda*, IV. 24, 10, which was also noticed by Macdonell and others. The latter thought that it was a late passage probably containing an allusion to some concrete symbol of Indra. It is : *Ka imaṃ daśabhirmamendraṃ krīṇāti dhenubhiḥ* l *Yadā vṛtrāṇi jaṃghanadathainaṃ me punardadat* (' Who will buy this my Indra for ten cows? When he has slain his foes, he may give him back to me'). Venkateswara remarks about the passage thus : " The context shows that there were permanent images of Indra made and hired for what was in probability an Indra festival, and there were apparently images of Vṛtra made for each occasion, whence the plural Vṛtrāṇi to be slain by Indra." With regard to *R. V.*, V. 52, 15, noticed above, Venkateswara makes this significant observation, " This passage is also interesting in that it shows that there was no idol worship, but that images were used as concrete representations of gods whose real form and existence were conceived as different." The existence of two forms of each god, one the concrete and

[1] Venkateswara says that this is a description of Agni; for a late sculpture of a deity corresponding to it, now to be found in the east gate of the Chidambaram temple, see H. Krishna Sastri's *South Indian Gods and Goddesses*, Fig 147; Krishna Sastri describes it as Agni, but it should more accurately be described as Yajñapuruṣa, one of the minor manifestations of Viṣṇu; *cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part 1, pp. 248-50.

finite and the other the abstract and infinite, is clear according to him in a *Yajurveda* passage (*T.S.*, I. 7. 12; also *A.V.*, VII. 31) which reads *svayā tanvā tanumairayata* (' with your own, *i.e.*, real, body enter this concrete body '). In his opinion, the image is regarded in the *Ṛgveda* merely as a physical tenement of the real form of the god, while in these texts we have two forms of the god mentioned—that in the image being only an apparent and evanescent form, and that in the universe being the real and permanent form (*svā tanuḥ*). He finds reference to the relationship of these forms, finite and infinite, of the god even in the *Ṛgveda* (VII. 100, 6) which speaks of Viṣṇu's assumption of another, the finite form in the battle with Vṛtra, where he was a worthy companion of Indra (*yadanyarūpaḥ samithe babhūtha*); Indra, who used Viṣṇu as his vehicle (*Viṣṇvanuṣṭhitaḥ*), asked him to expand into the infinite space (*sakhe Viṣṇo vitaraṃ vikramasva*) elbowing Vṛtra out of existence till the latter begged to be received into the body of Indra himself. From this Venkateswara concluded that the belief was that the finite cabined in a particular form was not cribbed or confined by this fact but was capable of infinite expansion. He finds distinct references to the fashioning of images in such passages as *R. V.*, VI. 28, 6 (*a'rīraṃ cit kṛṇuthā supratīkaṃ i.e.*, ' make that which was an ugly mass a beautiful image '); *R.V.*, IV. 17, 4 (*Indrasya kartā svapastamo bhūt, i.e.*, ' the maker of Indra was a most stalwart being, a most skilful workman '); casting of metal images is also referred to in the *Ṛgveda* and other Vedas in such passages as *R.V.*, VIII. 69, 12 (*sūrmyam suṣirāmiva, i.e.*, ' like a hollow tube '), *R. V.*, X. 184, 1 (*Viṣṇuryoniṃ kalpayatu tvaṣṭā rūpāṇi piṃśatu* l *Ā siñcatu prajāpatirdhātā garbhaṃ dadhātu te, i.e.*, ' May Viṣṇu make the female organ fit; may Tvaṣṭā fix the limbs; may Prajāpati sprinkle; may Dhātā hold your embryo '), *R.V.*, I. 32, 2 (*Tvaṣṭāsmai vajraṃ svaryaṃ tatakṣa, i.e.*, ' Tvaṣṭā made the thunderbolt for Indra, which could be far flung '), etc. He further finds references to temples (*devagṛhas*) in such passages as *R.V.*, VII. 56, 14 (*Sahasriyaṃ damiyaṃ bhāgametaṃ gṛhamedhīyaṃ maruto juṣadhvam,*

i.e., ' Oh! Maruts accept this your portion offered at the temple '), *R.V.*, VII. 59, 10 (*Gṛhamedhāsa, i.e.*, the Maruts in the houses are munificent), etc. Venkateswara thinks that this inference from the passages is supported by the finds of images of the storm gods in Babylonia. He even finds allusion to processions of images in *R. V.*, I. 10, 1 and III. 53, 5-6. " In the latest (*Khila*) Vedic texts, the goddess Srī is represented as a golden antelope adorned with garlands of silver and gold " (he obviously refers to the *Śrī Sūkta* in this statement).

The arguments of the two sets of scholars holding opposite views about the problem under discussion had to be given at some length in order to assess their proper worth. The whole question, however, revolves round the correct understanding of the nature of the religion which was in vogue among the higher section of the Indo-Aryans in the Vedic period. The early and late Vedic texts mostly throw light on the customs and practices of this class of people, and whatever hypothesis we make is mainly concerned about them. There are certain passages in the texts, however, which may incidentally throw some light on the beliefs and practices of the pre-Aryan settlers of India. The former believed in the divine character of the many and various forces of nature which inspired their awe and imagination. Not only these were duly personified and venerated by them, but also various abstract principles were raised by them to a similar august position and respected. The ostensible mode of the expression of their regard for these multifarious divinities was by means of the ritualistic performance of various types of sacrifices in which a certain spirit of contract prevailed. The god or gods in whose honour different sacrifices were to be performed by a king or a nobleman with the help of his priests, really the mediators, were required to fulfil the desires of the sacrificer. He sought to propitiate the divine powers by the process of offering gifts to them, realising fully his comparative weakness and inability to exist satisfactorily without their constant aid. Again, such was the efficacy of these sacrificial offerings, accompanied by regular prayers in the

shape of hymns recited and sung with due intonation and emphasis, that the whole act used to cast a spell as it were on the deities who then condescended to grant his desires. There was no one particular god who was venerated as the highest by the hymnist or his client for all times and places, and the same man who was extolling the greatness of a certain god in one hymn and subordinating the other divinities to him might in the next hymn make another the most exalted. Thus, the main trend of the religion as practised by the higher section of the early Vedic Indo-Aryans was polytheistic and henotheistic or kathenotheistic, in which sacrifice played the most important part; it was, in fact, the religious practice, *par excellence*, which was full of ritualistic acts (*kriyāviśeṣabahula*) and which had for its objective the attainment of wealth and enjoyment in this world (*bhogaiśvaryagatiṃ prati*). Other-worldliness was mostly conspicuous by its absence in the thought of the early Vedic Indo-Aryan, who felt a real pleasure in living a prosperous and joyful life. There was little scope for deep meditation in his early rituals, his deities being hardly ever the objects of his *dhyānayoga*. In such religious practice as briefly outlined above, what conceivable place could be assigned to the images of the Vedic gods? Those scholars who advocate their existence in this period would have us believe that all these sacrificial acts were performed in the presence of these sensible representations. But, in most of the early authoritative Brāhmaṇas, which lay down with meticulous details the mode of performing the various sacrifices, there is practically no reference to the idols of the gods, which would certainly have been explicitly mentioned if they were found necessary. In the subsequent period of the history of India, when the divine images had come to play a requisite part in the religious lives of her people, they are clearly described as such in the contemporary literature.

Scholars like Bollensen and Venkateswara mainly utilise the anthropomorphic descriptions of many of the Vedic divinities as contained in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* in support of their theory. But what is the extent of this anthropomorphism? Keith correctly remarks, " Though it would be wrong to ignore the anthropomorphic character of the gods, the Vedic pantheon has none of the clearcut figures of the Greek, and unlike the Greek deities it is seldom difficult to doubt that the anthropomorphic forms but faintly veil phenomena of nature."[1] The degree of this anthropomorphism, again, was extremely variable. Such deities like Sūrya, Uṣas, Agni, etc., for example, were intimately connected with their natural bases, and thus they could have very little of this element in their character; whereas Indra, Varuṇa and some other Vedic gods, who were considerably freed from their connection with the phenomena which produced their conception, could possess it to a very great extent. The endowment of the Vedic gods with particular forms in the imagination of the seers has been discussed at length by Yāska in his *Nirukta*, a work to be dated as early as 500 B.C. This interesting discussion requires to be fully quoted here, as it throws a flood of light on the problem at issue. Yāska writes, " Now follows discussion of the form of the gods (*ākāra-cintanaṃ devatānām*). Some say, they resemble human beings in form (*puruṣavidhāḥ*), for their panegyrics and their appellations are like those of sentient beings; and their human limbs are referred to in the hymns. . . . . They are also (associated in their hymns of praise) with objects with which men are usually associated. . . . . Moreover, they are associated with the sort of actions with which men are usually associated. Others say, the gods do not resemble human beings in form (*apuruṣavidhāḥ*), because those gods that are (actually) seen do not resemble human beings in form; as, for instance, Agni (fire-god), Vāyu (wind-god), Āditya (sun-god), Pṛthivī (earth-goddess), Candramas (moon-god), etc. As to the view that panegyrics of the gods are like those of sentient beings, (they reply) that inanimate objects, beginning from dice and ending with herbs, are likewise praised. As to the view that

[1] A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, Vol. I, p. 58.

the human limbs of the gods are referred to in the hymns, (they reply) that this (treatment) is accorded to inanimate objects. . . . As to the view (that in their hymns of praise the gods are associated) with objects with which men are associated, (they reply) that it is just the same (in the case of inanimate objects). . . . . Or the gods may both resemble human beings in form as well as may not resemble human beings in form. Or the gods who do not resemble human beings in form exist in the form of Karman (sacrifice); as for instance, the sacrifice performed by the Yajamāna (sacrificer). This is the opinion of those who know the legends.''[1] This long quotation fully illustrates the attitude of a person of the 6th century B.C., well-versed in the Vedic lore, to the whole question of anthropomorphism of the Vedic divinities. To this anthropomorphisation will have to be added the characteristic manner of presenting many of the gods in theriomorphic forms, the latter again in some instances being ideologically connected with the different deities. Thus, the sun traversing through the wide firmament of the sky could be easily conceived as a mythical bird having beautiful wings (*suparṇo garutmān*); the fleet-footed horse might also symbolise the sun as a Ṛgvedic verse indicates (VII. 77, 3; here the goddess Dawn is said to lead a white steed). Sometimes, this connection cannot be easily established. Thus, Agni is very often likened to various animals, " in most cases doubtless with a view to indicating his functions rather than representing his personal form.'' He is endowed with various animal and other forms such as those of a bull, a calf, a steed, an eagle, a swan and many other things. Two deities who are conceived invariably in animal form are the one-footed goat (Aja Ekapād) and the serpent of the deep (Ahi budhnya). The former may be the lightning flash coming

[1] Lakshman Sarup, *The Nighaṇṭu* and *The Nirukta*, English Translation and Notes, pp. 116-17. R. P. Chanda first noted the importance of this passage in his work, *The Beginnings of Art in Eastern India*, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 30, pp. 1-2. Gopinath Rao, on the basis of this passage in the *Nirukta*, wrongly inferred that image worship seems to have become common in the time of Yāska; T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 5.

down to earth in a single streak while the latter would seem to be an atmospheric deity dwelling in the atmospheric ocean. But these and many other similar concepts are pure and simple imageries without actual concrete bases. These theriomorphic and anthropomorphic descriptions, however, played an important part in the evolution of some of the cult gods in the subsequent religious history of India. Thus, it will be interesting to refer to two typical cases. Rudra, the Vedic base of the cult god Śiva, is very often mythologically connected with Agni in the Epic and Purāṇic literature. Agni has been likened frequently with a bull in the Vedic texts, and Rudra himself is called a bull in some Vedic verses (*cf. R.V.* II. 33, 8: *Pra babhrave vṛṣabhāya śvitīce* etc., or II. 33, 6: *Unmā mamanda vṛṣabho marutvān*, etc.). Now, on the basis of this very fact, Rudra-Śiva is sometimes primarily conceived in the form of a bull, and there are definite numismatic data in support of the representation of Śiva as a bull. But, by a converted mental process of thinking on the part of his worshipper, the theriomorphic form of the deity is assigned the position of a mount of the same god conceived anthropomorphically. Again, in some much later representations, this so-called animal mount of Rudra-Śiva is made to assume the pure human form of the deity himself, with this difference only that its front hands are shown in the *añjali* pose. Similarly, the Vedic Viṣṇu, one of the constituent elements of the composite cult god Vāsudeva-Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu of the Epic and Purāṇic age, is undoubtedly one of the aspects of the sun-god in the Vedic period. The sun-bird, Garutmān referred to above, is invariably assigned the position of the mount or vehicle to the above-named cult deity and is represented in the later art as a hybrid creature, part man and part bird (though in the early Buddhist monument of Sanchi, Garuḍa is represented as a mythical bird with *kuṇḍalas* in its ear). But the concrete representations of these anthropomorphic, theriomorphic and hybrid forms make their appearance in the sectarian art of much later date, and we do not find any reference whatsoever to such figures in the multifarious descriptions of the early Vedic divinities.

It is to be noted, however, that the affinity of these later hybrid creatures of imagination is more marked with the different composite forms of a peculiar character found on the various Indus Valley seals of the pre-Vedic period. The latter have been discussed at some length in the first part of Chapter V of this book.

It will be useful, now, to consider in their proper perspective some of the early Vedic texts, already referred to, which are utilised by Bollensen and Venkateswara in support of their views. The whole of the 33rd hymn of the second *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda*, the first line of the 9th verse of which is taken by the former to allude to a painted image of Rudra, contains the praises of the god in which he is described in various ways; thus in verse 3, he is addressed as Vajrabāhu (with thunderbolt-like arms); in verse 5 he is characterised as soft-bellied, of good hailing voice, brown and possessing a beautiful nose (*Ṛdūdaraḥ suhavo...babhruḥ suśipro...*); in verse 8, he is brown and white at the same time (*babhrave... śvitīce*); in verse 10, he is addressed as the worthy god holding bow and arrow, wearing a beautiful and multiformed *niṣka* garland (*i.e.*, a garland made of *niṣkas* covered with many forms—*Arhan bibharṣi sāyakāni dhanvārhan niṣkaṃ yajataṃ viśvarūpaṃ*); above all, in the line quoted by Bollensen the word *pururūpaḥ* (having multifarious forms) shows that the god Rudra was endowed with various forms according to the imagination of the hymnist Gṛtsamada, and there is not the least justification for assuming that these were based on actual concrete figures. Similarly, the allusion to a probable image of Varuna wearing a golden coat of mail with spies sitting around him, in *R. V.*, I. 25, 13, is not at all convincing. Varuṇa, the moral god, sung by the hymnist in various ways, is conceived as covered by a coat of mail and veiled in his radiance, thus being impervious to prying eyes, but himself looking into the secret virtues and vices of the mortals; the hymnist's idea about his spies is a necessary corollary of this conception about him, for the god sends them to look into the actions of mankind and report to him all about them. As regards *R. V.*, V. 52, 15, Max Müller has translated the

whole verse in this way, " If he, after perceiving them, has approached them as gods with an offering, then may he for a gift remain united with the brilliant (Maruts) who by their ornaments are glorious on their march." He further remarks, " This verse, as Roth says, is very obscure;...whatever the verse may mean, *eṣāṃ devāñ* cannot mean the gods of the Maruts or prove the existence of idols, as Bollensen and even Muir imagined."[1] This verse is undoubtedly difficult of correct interpretation; it is extremely uncertain whether the particular extract from it at all means the images of the Maruts, and one cannot support a theory with the help of this enigmatic passage. The eleventh verse in the same hymn, however, may throw some light on it; there we are told that the Maruts might assume different forms according to their different functions (*iti citrā rūpāṇi darśyā*), such as protecting the world or collectively supporting it or sustaining from afar (the planets, stars and others). The devas in the passage in question may mean these various imaginary forms. In any case, if we read the whole hymn in which it occurs, we cannot but hesitate to accept the interpretation put upon it by the above-mentioned scholars. *Śumbhatā* in the passage in *R. V.*, I. 21, 2, explained by Sāyaṇa as '*nānāvidhairalankāraiḥ śobhitau kuruta*', actually means 'adorned with various praises,' which are figuratively taken by Sāyaṇa to mean ornaments The words *sūrmyaṃ suṣirāmiva* in *R. V.*, VIII. 69, 12, cannot unquestionably refer to an image of Varuṇa in that particular context; Ballantyne's rendering of this passage is based on the similar description of a perforated iron image in later works, which was heated and employed as a sort of punishment for wrong-doers who were compelled to embrace it. But that sense can hardly be applied here. No great importance can be assigned to the descriptive epithets as *suśipra, kapardin, darśata* and such others which merely emphasise the anthropomorphic conception of the deities to whom they are applied. The Ṛgvedic verse, *Catvāri śṛṅgā* etc. (IV. 58, 3), merely presents

[1] *S.B.E.*, XXXII, pp. 313, 317-18.

to us in a metaphorical manner the Vedic sacrifice. Yāska explains the imagery, thus, " The four horns stand for the four Vedas, three legs for the three *savanas, viz.*, the *prātaḥ-*, the *mādhyandina-* and the *tṛtīya-savana*, the two heads for the *iṣṭis, viz.*, the *prāyaṇīya* and the *udayanīya*, and the seven hands for *sapta chandas* or the *mantras*. Here sacrifice is likened to a bull bellowing, tied in three ways ; this threefold binding is explained by Yāska as referring to its association with the *mantras*, *brāhmaṇas* and the *kalpasūtras* ; the bellowing of the bull stands for the praising of the gods in sacrifices with *Ṛk-mantras*, offering oblations to them with *Yajus* ones, and praying to the gods with *Sāman* songs. The god Sacrifice is said to have entered into human beings for the purpose of making them offer sacrifices.[1] Such passages as *R. V.*, VI. 28, 6 and IV. 17, 4, which according to Venkateswara contain distinct references to the fashioning of images, do not admit of the interpretations which have been put upon them, if they are read along with their contexts. What is the full meaning of the two verses in which the above occur? In the first, cows, probably the clouds alluded to in a metaphorical manner, are exhorted by the hymnist, Bharadvāja, the son of Bṛhaspati, to nourish him and his people, to make lean, and thus ugly-looking, bodies beautiful, and to make his and his friends' houses prosperous; the cows are described as emitting auspicious sounds, the gifts of which are so well sung in the sacrificial assemblies (*Yūyaṃ gāvo medayathā kṛśaṃ cidaśrīraṃ citkṛnuthā supratīkam | Bhadraṃ gṛhaṃ kṛṇutha bhadravāco bṛhadvo vaya ucyate sabhāsu*). In the second, on the other hand, Vāmadeva

[1] Yāska, *Nirukta*, XIII. 1, 7—*Catvāri śṛṅgā itivedā vā etā uktāstrayo asya pādā iti svarāṇi trīṇi dve śīrṣe prāyaṇiyodayaniye saptahastāsaḥ sapta chandāṃsi tridhābaddhaḥ tredhā baddho mantrabrāhmaṇakalpairvṛṣabho roravīti roravaṇamasya savanakrameṇa ṛgbhiryajurbhissāmabhiryadenamṛgbhiśśaṃsanti yajurbhiryajanti sāmabhisstuvanti mahodeva ityeṣa hi mahān devo yadyajño martyo āviveśetyeṣa hi manuṣyānāviśati yajanāya tasyottarā bhūyase nirvacanāya.* Reference has already been made to a late sculpture corresponding partly to this description (the figure is human, its mount being the bull) in the eastern Gopura of the Chidambaram temple. It is Viṣṇu in one of his minor manifestations; in the Brāhmaṇa literature (*cf. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XIV. 1, 1, 6), Viṣṇu is identical with sacrifice, and here we see the imagery is carried further and given a concrete shape.

Ṛṣi describes Dyaus who was the progenitor of Indra, copiously praised, wielder of good thunderbolt and not fallen from heaven, as being possessed of a valiant son by bringing forth whom Dyaus became a most skilful workman (*Suvīraste janitā manyata dyaurindrasya kartā svapastamo bhūt | Ya īṃ jajāna svaryaṃ suvajramanapacyutaṃ sadaso na bhūma*). Thus, there cannot be the least justification for our finding in any portion of these *Ṛk* verses a reference to the practice of image-making. *Pratīka* in the first passage should not be made much of, because the sense of a symbol or an image became attached to it in later texts ; as *vigraha* primarily meant a body and secondarily also came to denote an image, so was the case with this word. Very little also can be said in support of the above-named scholar's method of finding a reference to the practice of casting metal images in the particular passages quoted by him from the *Ṛgveda*. The late hymn of the text (*R. V.*, X. 184, 1) is really a *mantra* uttered in the time of impregnation (*garbhādhāna*), and there are clear indications of the real meaning of the three verses constituting the hymn. As regards the particular passages in such *Ṛk* verses as VII. 56, 14, and VII. 59, 10, if these are taken to allude to the temples of the Maruts, numerous others may be collected from the same text, which can be assumed to denote them. But the fact is that there is practically no support for the assumption that words like *gṛhamedhīyaṃ* or *gṛhamedhāsa* even distantly allude to the temples or shrines of such Vedic gods as the Maruts. The characteristic terms, however, used in the *gṛhyasūtras*, as we shall presently see, are *devagṛha, devāgāra, devakula, devāyatana*, etc., which denote the shrines of the gods ; but, by the time the latest section of the Vedic literature was composed, images and temples had already been accepted by the higher sections of the Vedic Indo-Aryans. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, description is given of a structure of post and thatch with mat walls, which was discussed by Simpson as denoting a temple ; but Coomaraswamy has rightly pointed out that " this was a building for the performance of sacrifices, not a temple in the later sense." This,

again, was a very simple shed of the primitive type and was called *prācīnavaṃśa* or *prāgvaṃśa* (also described as *śālā*) on account of the top beams which were bamboo ones extending from west to east; on a different mode of laying these again, the fire chapel was differently designated. In the *udīcīnavaṃśa* type of structure, also named *vimata* by Hiranyakeśin (*Śrautasūtra*, 3, 2 and 7, 1), the beams were laid from south to north. In more pompous types of sacrifices performed by kings, these types of buildings also served as fire chapels. In the Brāhmaṇa literature, again, " many precise and elaborate details are given regarding the building of altars, generally fire-altars " of various shapes; and it is noteworthy that the rules for the construction of these sacrificial altars, given in the *Śulva Sūtras*, make use of dynamic symmetry, of which no trace can be recognised at a later period.[1] But nowhere in such literature is to be found any reference, however slight, to the mode of construction of temples or shrines, which must have found some place if the images and temples had played some part in the sacrificial religion of the early Vedic Indo-Aryans. The supposed allusion to the processions of the images of Indra in *Ṛgveda*, I. 10, 1 and III. 53, 5-6, if carefully scrutinised, will be found to rest on no better data.

It has been found necessary to discuss the views of Bollensen and Venkateswara at some length in the above paragraphs, because their hypothesis was adumbrated with great skill and confidence as well as with the hypothetical support of elaborate textual data, their presentation of the case being by far the ablest one. Brindavan Ch. Bhattacharyya, in the long introduction to his work on *Indian Images*, Part I, did also expound the view sponsored by the above scholars; but the premises laid down by him in support of his conclusion were more or less the same as have been critically estimated and need not be discussed here in detail. The Ṛgvedic verse, X. 130, 3, does not prove the existence of the practice of image worship in early Vedic

[1] Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 42.

religion; but as has been pointed out above that the verse, if it is read along with the succeeding ones and if the commentary of Sāyaṇa is properly understood, does not at all justify us in finding in it an allusion to the making of images of the early Vedic gods and worshipping them. The mere use of the word *pratimā* or *pratīka* without the proper context will not be sufficient to demonstrate anything. Venkateswara, as has been pointed above, expressly remarks with reference to *R. V.*, V. 52, 15, " that it shows that there was no idol worship." In this connection, the interesting remark of Bloomfield requires to be noted at length: "The mind of the Vedic poet is the rationalistic mind of the ruminating philosopher, rather than the artistic mind which reproduces the finished product. It is engaged too much in reasoning about and constantly altering the wavering shapes of the gods, so that these remain to the end of Vedic time too uncertain in outline, too fluid in substance for the modelling hand of the artist. On a pinch we could imagine a statue of the most material of the Vedic god Indra; but it is hard to imagine a statue of the god Varuṇa. As a matter of fact there is no record of Vedic ikons, or Vedic temples. In all these senses there is no Vedic Pantheon."[1] The long extract from Yāska's *Nirukta*, already referred to above, dealing with the anthropomorphism of the Vedic gods, should be noted again in this connection. R. P. Chanda rightly remarks, in regard to it, " This discussion clearly shows that up to the time of Yāska which synchronises with the last phase of the Vedic period the Vedic gods had not been invested with the forms in which they appear in the Epics and the Purāṇas."[2] Non-existence of images and temples or the absence of the practice of image-worship among the higher section of the Vedic Indo-Aryans was not the characteristic only of this ancient people of the world. Many other nations of the ancient world can be shown to have been aniconists in practice. It is late in the religious history of

[1] Bloomfield, *Religion of the Veda*, p. 89.

[2] R. P. Chanda, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 30, p. 2. The *Gṛhyasūtras* which refer to shrines of gods are collectively to be placed much later than Yāska.

China and Japan that any tangible traces of image-worship are to be found. Many of the nomadic tribes of the Semites did not practise it. "Among the Jews it appeared only in exceptional cases (*e.g.*, the Golden Calf and the Brazen Serpent). Caesar and Tacitus assert that there were neither temples nor images among the Teutons. In Rome, according to Varro, the Romans lived 170 years without representing their gods by images. Even among the Greeks we find scarcely any traces of idolatry in the time of the Pelasgi."[1]

When Bloomfield very guardedly wrote that one could imagine ' on a pinch ' a statue of Indra as he was the most material of the Vedic gods, he had in his mind the verses (*R. V.*, IV. 24, 10 and VIII. 1, 5) which had already been noted. Macdonell thus observes in his *Vedic Mythology* (p. 155), " Material objects are occasionally mentioned in the later Vedic literature as symbols representing deities. Something of this kind (possibly an image) must be meant even in a passage of the *Ṛgveda*, in which the poet asks, ' Who will buy this, etc'." Again, in *R. V.*, VIII. 1, 5, reference to some form of an idol is seen by him. The hymnist says, "O thunderbolt-bearing Indra. We do not sell you even at a large price; O Vajra-bearer, not even for thousands or ten thousands of riches; O possessor of many treasures, not even in exchange of untold wealth " (*Mahe cana tvāmadrivaḥ parā śulkāya deyām। Na sahasrāya nāyutāya vajrivo na śatāya śatāmagha*). Hopkins remarks about these two passages in his *Religions of India* (p. 150), thus, " That images of the gods were supposed to be powerful may be inferred from the late verses (*R. V.*, IV. 24, 10)—'Who will buy my Indra, etc'., but allusions to idolatry are elsewhere extremely doubtful." There can be no gainsaying the fact that in these two passages, very likely references to some sensible representations of Indra are made, for these are actually offered for hire by the hymnist. But, even here, if we read these verses along with the context, we feel grave doubt about accepting them as referring to actual images of

1 *Encyoclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VII., p. 113.

Indra. As Coomaraswamy remarks, " Just as the Bodhi-tree and *pādukā* at Bharhut are called ' Buddha ' (*bhagavato*), so here a symbol may have been referred to as 'Indra' " (H.I.I.A., p. 42). But, here also the analogy is not complete. In the case of the various symbols aniconically representing the Master in the early Buddhist art of Central India, there cannot be the least hesitation in accepting them as regular objects of worship (*pūjā*); the use of the word ' *bhagavat* ' in the Bharhut labels, the attitude of the accessory human and animal figures clustering round the central symbol in the bas-reliefs, and the very nature of the monuments in which they appear leave no doubt as regards their character. These Indra fetishes, on the other hand, were they mere symbols or images, were certainly not so many objects of worship. Reference has already been made to Venkateswara's remark about accepting these as permanent images of Indra' used in Indra festival. But the very context in the former passage and the term '*vṛtrāṇi*' used in it give in my opinion the clue regarding their character. These were in all probability meant for *abhicāra* purposes, for inflicting harm and injury on the enemies of the hirer by performing some sacrificial rituals in which they were principally utilised; if this interpretation of their original character is accepted, there remains no ground for Venkateswara's supposition that *vṛtrāṇi* in the passage means ' apparently images of Vṛtra made for each occasion, whence the plural *vṛtrāṇi* to be slain by Indra.' As Vṛtra was the arch enemy of Indra, the plural of the word in this passage figuratively refers to the enemies of the hirer, who were to be harmed or slain through the agency of these Indra fetishes. This is fully borne out by Sāyana in this manner; the commentator says, *Tadānīṃ he kretāro yuṣmākaṃ madhya evamapi samayaḥ kriyate। Yadāyamindro vṛtrāṇi tvadīyān śatrūn jaṃghanat*, etc., *i.e.*, the hymnist says that this Indra of mine when it had killed your Vṛtras, *i.e.*, enemies, etc. Reference to *abhicāra* ritual, though implicit here, is explicit in many other Vedic, especially Brāhmaṇa, passages, and a substantial portion of the *Atharvaveda* is devoted to it. Thus, there

can be no question of placing the Indra fetishes on the same footing with the images of the cult gods of the subsequent period, though we shall see afterwards that particular varieties of some of the latter were used also for *abhicāra* purposes (the rites associated with these acts unquestionably differed in the two periods). The above-mentioned sensible representations of Indra again remind us of various other objects which are mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas as symbolising several Vedic divinities, all these symbols being necessarily intimately connected with the rituals of sacrifice. Thus, " the wheel is in various ritual performances employed as a symbol of the sun, as representing both its shape and its motion. It is thus used in the Vājapeya sacrifice, in the ceremony of laying the sacrificial fire, and at the solstitial festival. Gold or a fire-brand was employed as a symbol of the sun, when drawing water after sunset instead of before; and in piling the fire-altar, a disc of gold was placed on it to represent the sun."[1] But the clearest mention of a sensible representation is in association with the *Agnicayana* ceremony in sacrifice. This ceremony deals with the building of the fire-altar, independently of the ordinary *Agnyādheya* and *Punarādheya* ceremonies (the installation and the re-installation of the sacrificial fires). The *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* (V. 2, 6-9) lays down that the objects named below are to be deposited in the foundation of the altar in this particular rite—a lotus leaf, a gold disc, a golden man (*hiraṇmaya puruṣa*), two wooden ladles, a perforated brick, a brick of *dūrvā* grass, a living tortoise, the heads of dead animals including those of a horse and a bull, a mortar, a pan in the middle of which the head of the man is put, and the head of a snake. R. P. Chanda surmises that " in such a company the golden man probably represents the human victim originally immolated and buried at the foundation of a sacred edifice." It may be mentioned

[1] Macdonell, Vedic Mythology. p. 155. With regard to the wheel and the golden disc symbolising the sun, Coomaraswamy's remarks are worth quoting, " The wheel which later on becomes the mark of a Chakravartin, the discus of Viṣṇu and the Buddhist Wheel of the Law, originally represented the sun. The disc of gold placed behind the fire-altar to represent the sun may well be the origin of the later *prabhāmaṇḍala* or *śiraścakra* (nimbus)" (*H.I.I.A.*, p. 41).

here *in passim* that in the foundation ceremonies of buildings in many parts of India, one rite consists of drawing in outline with vermilion paint the figure of a man on a full-sized brick which is then placed in the lowermost depth of the foundation trench, it being understood that the particular brick with the outline drawing must not be disturbed in any way during the construction; this figure is described in the ritual texts dealing with *vāstuyāga* as *vāstupuruṣa* to whom flowers, sandal paste, and five jewels (*pañcaratna*) are offered. The partially sacred character of the golden man, also, has rightly been emphasised by Chanda by referring to a *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* passage (VII. 4, 1, 15) which identifies it with Prajāpati, Agni and even the sacrificer himself in turn. With regard to the mode of representation, the following extract from the same text (VII. 4, 1, 15) deserves careful notice, " As to this they say ' Let him make no arms to this golden man, lest he should cause him to be redundant; for these two spoons are (in lieu of) his arms.' Let him nevertheless make (him with arms)."[1] Coomaraswamy offers an apposite comparison of this crude figure, which must have been a plaque in human form, with the "little plaque supposed to represent Pṛthivī found in a burial mound, regarded as Vedic, at Lauriya Nandangarh" (H.I.I.A., p. 42). This may also be compared with the tiny gold-leaf female figure which was found among many other precious and semi-precious objects in the inscribed relic casket at Piprawa, the relics, as the inscription informs us, being associated with Buddha. After a critical consideration of all these data, it can be confidently observed that, even when some references to symbols or sensible representations are found in the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic texts, this does not necessarily mean that they were the images proper of the respective divinities.

[1] For the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* passage, *cf.* Keith, *The Veda of the Black Yajus*, Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 19, pp. 409-14. For the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* reference, *cf.* Eggeling, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLI, p. 376. R. P. Chanda first noticed the importance of these passages in his *Memoir* (No. 30), p. 2, and rightly observed that there was no room for images of gods in the Vedic form of worship (*yajña*).

It has already been pointed out that the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic texts mostly furnish us with material evidence concerning the beliefs and practices of the higher section of the Indo-Aryans. Thus, the view here presented to us is palpably one-sided, and our knowledge about the religious practices of the vast mass of the people and the original settlers of India is necessarily scanty. Eliot's remark that "we cannot assume that ideas or usages not mentioned in the *Ṛgveda* did not exist at the time when it was composed" (*Hinduism and Buddhism*, Vol. I., p. 53) is true to a great extent. The information supplied to us by data gleaned from it and the subsequent allied literature, is not merely negative, but also positive with regard to the customs of a certain section of the people; the practice of making images of their gods and worshipping them is not only not mentioned in them, but there is also positive evidence, as we have seen above, that in the type of religion sanctioned by them there could have been no place for it. But was it in vogue among the other vast section of the Indian people on whose customs and faith only occasional and fitful light is thrown by the above texts? We cannot be definitely sure in our answer to this question. But in the *Ṛgveda*, there are one or two passages which seem to have a direct bearing on it. Certain classes of people are referred to in a deprecatory manner by the hymnists in two of the *Ṛk* verses, one in *R. V.*, VII. 21, 5, and the other in X. 99, 3. In the first verse Indra is prayed to in order that the Rākṣasas may not harm the hymnist and he may kill the ferocious animals; the god is also besought not to let the Śiśnadevas approach the sacrifice (*Na yātava Indra jūjuvurno na vandanā śaviṣṭha vedyābhiḥ । Sa śardhadaryo viṣuṇasya jantormā śiśnadevā api gurtaṃ naḥ*); in the second one, Indra is described as having slain the Śiśnadevas, when he won the treasure of the hundred-gated fort (*Anarvā yacchatadurasya vedo ghnañchiśnadevāñ abhi varpasā bhūt*). These Śiśnadevas, as they are mentioned along with the Rākṣasas (*yātava*) in the first, and as they are looked down upon and deprecated, have been taken by many European and Indian scholars to denote the original settlers

of India, the word meaning, according to them, those that have the phallus for their deity (*śiśna devaḥ yeṣāṃ te*). It must be said, however, that Sāyaṇa offered quite a different explanation of the term. He took it to mean those people that were addicted to sensual pleasures. The exact words used by Sāyaṇa in his commentary are—*Śiśnena divyanti krīḍanti iti śiśnadevāḥ । Abrahmacaryā ityarthaḥ*—which means that Śiśnadevas are those who play with their organs of generation, *i.e.*, those that have fallen from the vow of a Brahmacārī. He quotes Yāska in his support in this manner —*Tathā ca Yāskaḥ । Sa utsahatāṃ yo viṣuṇasya jantorviṣamasya mā śiśnadevā abrahmacaryāḥ । Śiśnaṃ snathateḥ । Api gurtaṃ naḥ satyaṃ vā yajñaṃ vā ।* (*Nirukta*, IV., 19). While commenting on the second passage (X. 99, 3), he uses the same explanation (*Śiśnadevān abrahmacaryān*); but, incidental reference may be made to his commentary on *R.V.*, X. 27, 19, where the word *śiśna* occurs. The last part of the above *Ṛk* is—*sadyaḥ śiśnā praminānо navīyān*; Sāyaṇa comments on it thus—*Sadyastadānīmeva śiśnā siśnāni । śiśnaṃ snathateriti nirvacanāt snathitṛni tāḍayitṛni rākṣasādivṛndāni praminānaḥ prakarṣeṇa himsan* etc. Here in this word he finds an allusion to Rākṣasas, presumably the original settlers of India deprecatingly mentioned. It is just possible that *śiśna* in this passage and *Śiśnadeva* in the two other passages quoted above denoted the same people. If this view is accepted, we find here an incidental reference to a particular religious practice of a certain section of the Indian population of the remote times. It can very well be presumed that this consisted of making sensible representations of the human phallus, which was conceived as symbolising principally the potent force at the root of creation, and worshipping them. The numerous phalli which have been discovered in the Indus Valley and which have been interpreted as the cult-objects of a people who were culturally different from the early Vedic Indo-Aryans go a great length in supporting the above conclusion. This peculiar custom of using the phalli for cult-purposes was not liked by the latter. Even when phallicism came to be inseparably

associated with the worship of Rudra-Śiva, the orthodox Indo-Aryans who upheld the original Vedic tradition were at first tardy in its recognition. Hopkins remarks with regard to the above Vedic passages, "Phallic worship may be alluded to in that of the 'tail gods,' as Garbe thinks, but is deprecated." He is quite correct in this cautious acceptance of a hypothesis put forward by various other scholars; but the other part of his remark, *viz.*, "One verse, however, which seems to have crept in by mistake is apparently due to phallic influence (*R.V.*, VIII. 1, 34), though such a cult was not openly acknowledged till Śiva worship began, and is no part of Brāhmaṇism," is open to criticism (*Religions of India*, p. 251). In the *Ṛk.* verse to which he refers, there is not the least allusion to anything in support of phallicism; it merely refers to the joy which was expressed by Śaśvatī, the wife of Asaṅga, in seeing her husband restored to full sexual powers as a result of the austerities practised by her. She merely describes her husband's organ in the verse, incidentally referring to her own feelings: *'Anvasya sthūraṃ dadṛśe purastādanastha ūruravaraṃvamāṇaḥ । Śaśvatī nāryabhicakṣyāha subhadramarya bhojanaṃ vibharṣi.'*

Another epithet, which is also deprecatingly used by the hymnists, in the *Ṛgveda* to denote certain classes of beings is *Mūradeva*. It occurs as many as three times, *viz.*, in VII. 104, 24, X. 87, 2 and X. 87, 14; in the first of these verses Indra is entreated to kill the Mūradevas, while in the last two, Agni, the killer of the Rākṣasas (*Rakṣohā*), is asked to do the same. It will be necessary to quote portions of these with Sāyaṇa's commentary on them in order to estimate the importance of this term. *R.V.*, VII. 104, 24 reads—*Indra jahi pumāṃsaṃ yātudhānamuta striyaṃ māyayā śāśadānām । Vigrīvāso mūradevā ṛdantu ma te dṛśantsūryamuccarantam.* It has been commented on by Sāyaṇa in this manner: *He indra pumāmsaṃ pumrūpadhāriṇaṃ yātudhānaṃ rākṣasaṃ jahi । māraya । Utāpi ca māyayā vañcanayā śāśadānāṃ hiṃsantīṃ striyaṃ rākṣasīṃ ca jātu । Api ca mūradevā māraṇakrīḍā rākṣasā vigrīvāso vicchinnagrīvāḥ santa ṛdantu*, etc. In the two others

mūradevān is once explained as *mūḍhadevān mārakavyāpārān rākṣasān*, and at the other place as simply *māravyāpārān rākṣasān*. So, this term has been consistently explained by Sāyaṇa as Rākṣasas who are destructive; but presumably on the basis of his commentary on the second of the verses referred to above, Wilson translated it as 'those who believe in vain gods.' A. C. Das, however, observed on this, "It seems to me that the word 'vain' is not the correct rendering of *mūra*, which may mean 'senseless' like stocks and stones. The word, therefore, may refer to persons who believed in and worshipped 'images' which were lifeless and senseless objects." Das is cautious in this statement; but shortly after, he offers definite opinion "that there were images of gods in Ṛgvedic times, though their worship was condemned by some of the advanced Aryan tribes."[1] We cannot be certain, however, on the basis of the data before us that the word in question definitely meant 'image-worshippers', and we cannot endorse the view upheld by Das in this connection that the Vedic gods were iconically represented.[2] But, if the first part of Das's view is accepted, then we find here a probable reference to a section of the original settlers of India who followed this particular custom. The term *mūra* in *mūradeva* may also mean 'root'; in that case the compound word may mean 'worshippers of root gods.' But this does not give us a very satisfactory explanation of the term.

[1] A. C. Das, *Rigvedic Culture*, p. 145. A. P. Banerjee Sastri notes the importance of the term in his article on 'Iconism in India' in *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XII, 1936, pp. 335-41. He suggests that *Mūradeva*, like the term *Ārya*, may denote an ethnic entity; that the Mauryas in the *Mahābhāṣya* passage (already noted by me) does not refer to the royal Mauryas, but to a tribe of long standing (*cf.* the Pāli Moriya); that *mūrti* is derived from *mūra* worshipped by the earliest pre-Vedic people, the Mūradevas, with whom may be affiliated the Yakṣas and the Mauryas.

[2] A. C. Das, *op. cit.*, p. 146. He cites *R.V.*, VIII. 69, 15-16, as referring to the mounting of an image of Indra on a golden chariot; according to him, the epithets *arbhako na kumārakaḥ* (like a small-limbed boy) applied to Indra can only have reference to the small image of the god placed on the car; the word *dampate* (householder) also in the same hymn, applied to Indra, probably refers, in his opinion, to the household image of the God worshipped by the Ṛṣi. But all this is based on data of a very uncertain character.

The character of the early Vedic religion, in which, as we have seen, there was no place for image-worship, gradually changed, and it will be necessary to consider whether this could find a place in its later phases. The age of the *Ṛgveda* was succeeded by that of the Brāhmaṇas or sacrificial treatises which were really practical guide books for the correct performance of various types of sacrifices. The *Yajurveda* and the *Sāmaveda* form a sort of connecting link between these two periods; in the latter period the ceremonious *yajña* came to be increasingly complicated and was left more and more in the hands of the initiated who had to complete a difficult course of studies in order to take any important part in it. It has already been pointed out that this elaborate ritual literature nowhere makes any mention of the image proper of the gods and the utmost that can be said about it is that it refers to some symbols of a few deities (mostly sun) utilised in times of particular sacrifices. The speculative section among the Indo-Aryans, however, did not long remain satisfied with the mere performance of these sacrifices, and they tried to assign special mystical significance to them. This was mostly the work of the Vānaprasthas, *i.e.*, those sages that had gone into the forest after completing their lives as householders, and the results of their speculations were incorporated in the Āraṇyakas, the name assigned to this kind of literature being significant. As this body of literature, or rather the earlier and more authoritative part of it (we should always be careful to exclude the *khilas* or supplements, for therein we find some materials concerning the later sectarian gods), is closely associated with the sacrifices,—it unfolds before us their meaning (*arthavāda*),—there is no chance of our ever finding in it any allusion to divine images and their worship. These works set a high value, however, on the performance of ascetic practices as acts of practical piety and religion, salvation being attainable by this austere asceticism. The natural sequel of these speculative efforts and ascetic practices was the age of the early authoritative Upaniṣads where the pursuit of

higher knowledge—the true knowledge about the Brahman, Ātman and the Universe—was the chief desideratum. The teaching incorporated in these works was usually regarded as something secret or esoteric. Deussen has correctly shown that the word *Upaniṣad* means 'sitting down at the feet of a teacher to receive secret instruction: hence a secret conversation or doctrine'; this element of secrecy is further emphasised by the fact that the word is used in the Upaniṣadic literature with three distinct meanings, such as, (1) Secret word (as '*satyasya satyam*', '*tadvanam*' or '*tajjalān*'—these words variously describing the Brahman), (2) Secret text (in the Taittiriyaka school a section often ends with the words,—'*iti upaniṣad*'), and (3) Secret import ('secret allegorical meaning of some ritual conception or practice'—*e.g.*, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 1. 1. 10:—'for that which is executed with knowledge, with faith, with the *Upaniṣad*, *i.e.*, the secret import of *udgītha* as *om*, that is more effective'). In such esoteric literature where the true nature of the Brahman and Ātman is being deeply cogitated, it will be futile to seek for references to concrete representations of deities; the Vedic gods no doubt make their occasional appearances there, but they do so as mere accessories either to illustrate some parable or to stand as a symbol for Brahman-Ātman (as Indra in the *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad*). The anthropomorphism which was present to a certain extent in their conception had no need to be emphasised in their present environment, and as for Brahman, it would be sheer folly to even think of him in terms of other concrete objects, much less to sensibly represent him (*Na sandṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpamasya, na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam; na tasya pratimā asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*). At best, various symbols, all abstract principles such as *prāṇāḥ* (vital breaths), *prajñā* (intellect), *ānanda* (bliss) or *ananta* (eternity), etc., were utilised by the thinkers in their attempts to realise the true nature of the Brahman; even such terms with intimate associations with sacrifice as *uktha* and the *udgītha*, and the sacrificial horse were thus used in the Upaniṣads of the respective schools of the *Ṛgveda*,

Sāmaveda and the *Yajurveda*.[1] The fundamentally speculative character of this literature, confined mostly to the domain of the intellectual, was certainly not conducive to the origin and growth of iconism.

But, the word of caution previously sounded is worth reiterating. The peculiar mystico-philosophical beliefs which are expressed in this class of literature only confine themselves to undoubtedly a smaller section of the people, obviously the higher intellectuals. Scholars are often prone to generalise and assume that what can be said about these few is applicable to all the Indians of a particular period. Grünwedel makes this observation about the general artistic activities of the Indians of the period to which the Vedas and Upaniṣads belong : " Though a religio-mystical element may serve as a scanty foil for fully perfected or decadent artistic efforts, the philosophical-scientific tendency, especially with the practical side which it had in ancient India, is an altogether barren soil for art."[2] We have practically no means of ascertaining from this class of literature the religious practices of the other larger section, though we shall see afterwards that the religious texts of the later heterodox sects like Buddhism and Jainism throw a flood of light on this subject. But, in the latest section of the Vedic literature, the *Khilas* (supplements) to the earlier authoritative Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas, and the Gṛhyasūtras, we have clear and unmistakable evidence about the recognition of the images of the gods and their shrines by the orthodox Vedic Brahmans (Snātakas and Gṛhasthas). The *Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* is a comparatively late addition to the *Tāṇḍya* or *Pañcaviṃśa Mahābrāhmaṇa*, one of the oldest Brāhmaṇas. In that part of the former which is known as '*Adbhuta Brāhmaṇa*,' really a Vedāṅga text dealing with miracles and omens, we find reference to the performance of various rites

[1] Such was the august position to which this literature was raised and such was the respect which was paid to it that even after the evolution of the various cult-deities, treatises were composed in imitation of it, whose main interest and purpose was to glorify one or other of the various cult-deities.

[2] Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 12.

for removing the evil effects of certain omens such as the trembling of the temples, the laughing, weeping, dancing, splitting, perspiring, opening and closing of the eyes of the divine images.[1] This passage certainly presupposes the partial recognition of the practice of image-worship. In the Sūtra literature, the Gṛhyasūtras (not the Śrautasūtras which are conversant about the rituals connected with sacrifice) which deal with the rites to be performed by the householders, we find this recognition more thorough. The *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* (III. 14, 8) tells us that the student (*snātaka*), when going in his chariot towards the images of gods (*daivatāni*), should descend from the chariot before he has reached them; if towards Brahmans, just before reaching them; if towards cows, when amid them; if towards fathers, when he has reached them. The *daivaṭas*, Brahmans, cows and fathers are mentioned in such a manner that the first one appears to be the most honoured among them. References also are to be found in this kind of literature to the shrines of the gods, and the terms used to denote them are '*devagṛha*', '*devāyatana*', '*devakula*' (its Prākṛta form is '*deul*'). But even here it is doubtful whether those images and shrines were in any way associated with the well-known members of the Vedic hierarchy like Indra, Agni, Mitra, Varuṇa, Uṣas, Aditi and others. The connection in which those gods are mentioned in the above texts does not mean that their images are referred to, and many are the new entrants such as Īśāna, Kṣetrapati, Mīḍhuṣī, Jayanta, Śrī, Dhanapati, Bhadrakālī and others, most of whom, it is presumable, had their icons and shrines. The whole of the *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra*, VII. 20, deals with the carrying about of the images of the bucolic deities like Iśāna, Mīḍhuṣī and Jayanta by the householder and placing them in huts built for them and offering to them boiled rice

[1] *Saḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, X. 5. *Devāyatanaṃ kampante daivapratimā hasanti rudanti nṛtyanti sphuṭanti svidyanti unmīlanti.* Brindaban Chandra Bhattacharyya cites this as an evidence in support of his theory that image-worship was practised by the early Vedic Indo-Aryans; *cf. Indian Images*, Part I, p. xxix.

from the *sthālipaka*. More about this change of outlook in religion among the Vedic initiates will be discussed in the next chapter.[1]

[1] *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra*, VII. 19, 13; *Hiraṇyakeśin Gr. S.*, II. 3, 8, 2-4; *Śāṅkhāyana Gr. S.*, II, 14, 14, 17, etc., *Pāraskara Gr. S.*, I. 16, 23 furnishes us with a list of the demons and goblins such as Saṇḍa, Marka, Upavīra, Śauṇḍikeya, Ulūkhala, Malimluca, Animiṣa, Hantṛmukha, Sarṣapāruṇa, Kumāra and many others who are propitiated with offerings of mustard seeds mixed with rice-chaff.

CHAPTER III

The Origin and Development of Image-worship in India

It has been said in the preceding chapter that the later sections of the Vedic literature distinctly indicate remarkable changes being introduced in the religious outlook of the Indo-Aryans. It is true that they did not relinquish the practices which were performed with so much zest by their forefathers, but there cannot be the least doubt that all these were having more re-orientation due to various factors that were in operation from the very beginning of the period when they first set their feet on Indian soil. The most important among these was undoubtedly the close contact which they had to come in with the previous inhabitants of India. However much they could revile the children of the Indian soil whom they were driving from the more covetable lands into the hills and jungles, with such deprecatory epithets as *dāsas, anāsas* (noseless ones), *yātus* or *yātudhānas, rākṣasas, śiśnadevas, mūradevas*, etc., it cannot be denied that some of these latter people possessed a sort of material culture which was much superior to that of their victors. It is a pity that we have not before us any literary record of what these people were like, what they believed and practised, what they thought of their conquerors, presented from their point of view; but the remains that have been unearthed in course of systematic excavations in the Indus Valley have brought to light immense evidence regarding the high and developed state of material civilisation with which their forefathers were endowed. The commingling of cultures of the immigrants and the former inhabitants was greatly responsible for the gradual introduction of various elements which are either not traceable, or traceable only in faint outlines, in the earlier literary works of the Indo-Aryans. The *Ṛgveda*, or the other Vedas and the early Brāhmaṇas, had

practically nothing to say on such topics as the law of *Karma*, the transmigration of souls and their necessary concomitant, the somewhat pessimistic view of life; but these were gradually being more and more discussed in the different Upaniṣads. The wholesale pessimism of the Buddhists might not have been the characteristic of the latter, but there is little doubt that the genius of the Upaniṣads wholly differs from that of the *Ṛgveda*, however many ties may bind the two periods. Again, the pantheism of the former can very well be contrasted with the belief in the multifarious nature-gods of the Aryans as portrayed in the latter. All these new elements can be presumed to have grown in the Indian soil, in the inception of which the earlier settlers in India did not play a mean part. Keith has very cautiously presented the problem in this way: "The Upaniṣads, as in some degree all earlier thought in India, represent the outcome of the reflections of a people whose blood was mixed. We may, if we desire, call the Upaniṣads the product of Aryo-Dravidian thought; but if we do so, we must remember that the effect of the intermixture must be regarded in the light of chemical fusion, in which both elements are transformed."[1]

The one important element, however, which has got special bearing on our subject and the name of which is to be found in at least one of the major Upaniṣads, is *Bhakti*, primarily the loving adoration of some persons by others, but secondarily the deep affectionate and mystic devotion for some personal deity who is the object of worship (in the developed sense of the term, *i.e.*, *pūjā*). If we briefly trace the history of the gradual emergence of *Bhakti* in the religious lives of the Indo-Aryans, we cannot but endorse the view just quoted. Among the several constituent factors which make up this element in its secondary aspect, the most important ones are 'belief in one personal god as spiritual being, the faith that his power is sufficient to secure that at the last the good will conquer, and lastly a conception of the nexus

[1] Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads*, Vol. II, p. 497.

that binds together God and his worshippers as mainly moral."[1] In the later stratum of the *Ṛgveda*, we find the struggling appearance of one supreme entity into which all the separately conceived Vedic divinities are merged.[2] Some faint traces of the belief in one moral god who looks after the consciences and works of men are certainly present in some of the Ṛgvedic characterisations of Varuṇa to whom prayers for forgiveness are offered by the hymnists.[3] Keith has observed, "The thought of India started from a religion which had in Varuṇa a god of decidedly moral character and the simple worship of that deity with its consciousness of sin and trust in the divine forgiveness is doubtless one of the first roots of Bhakti."[4] But this kind of worship dedicated to such a god was arrested in its growth, and the prominence given to the other gods like Indra, Agni, Soma, and others, intimately associated with sacrifice, adversely affected it. Even then in one of the late hymns of the *Ṛgveda* (X. 125), the goddess Vāc is made to say, "I give wealth unto him who gives sacrifice;...I am that through which one eats, breathes, sees and hears;...him that I love, I make strong, to be a priest, a seer, a sage." Eliot remarks about this passage, "This reads like an ancient preliminary study for the *Bhagavadgītā*. Like Kṛṣṇa, the deity claims to be in all and like him to reward her votaries."[5] In the Upaniṣads, on the other hand the mental attitude of the thinkers to the one supreme entity, *viz.*, Brahman-Ātman, gets a character which is, in no very uncertain manner, reminiscent of *Bhakti*. The growth and development of monotheism, a direct result of the pantheistic conception of the earlier Upaniṣads, was the certain background on which *Bhakti* was to develop among the intellectual

[1] N. Macnicol, *Indian Theism*, p. 7.

[2] *Cf.*, *R. V.*, I. 164. 46: *Indraṃ Mitraṃ Varuṇamagnimāhuratho divyaḥ sa suparṇo garutmān | Ekaṃ sadviprā bahudhā vadantyagniṃ yamaṃ mātariśvānamāhuḥ ||*

[3] *Cf.*, *R. V.*, I. 25, 1 and 2, and similar other verses.

[4] *J.R.A.S.*, 1915, p. 834.

[5] Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, Vol. II, p. 181. He says further, "It is true that the 'Come unto me' (*māmekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja*) is not distinctly expressed, but it is surely struggling for expression."

section of the composite population of India. The impersonal-personal Brahman was no doubt ill-suited to play the rôle of the one god of devotion and the strictly monistic character of some of the earlier Upaniṣadic passages was logically inimical to the ideas of loving faith; still there are many passages in some of them, which are significant. We are told in one of them that 'Ātman cannot be gained by the instruction, nor by understanding nor by much learning; he whom Ātman chooses, by him the Ātman can be gained; to him the Ātman reveals its own essence (or person).' Here, even though the idea of faith or love is not distinctly present, yet the positive assertion that Ātman selects its own and it cannot be gained by proficiency in the Vedic lore and other things does forcibly remind us of the free grace of the personal god.[1] This again seems to be clear in the *Kāṭhaka* passage (II. 20) which speaks of the ability of a person to see the glory of the Ātman if he is graced by the creator, if the word in this verse is taken to mean 'by the grace of the creator' *dhātuḥ prasādāt* and not 'through the tranquillity of the senses' (*dhātu-prasādāt*) as Śaṅkara explains it. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (III. 20) which contains much that is theistic in nature contains the same passage with an alteration which, though slight, is material.[2] It is in this Upaniṣad among the major ones, that we find for the first time the mention of the word *Bhakti* which occurs in the last verse of the work.[3] From this time onward references to it become clearer and clearer, and Pāṇini in the several sūtras of his *Aṣṭādhyāyī* lays down rules for various word-formations in which the

[1] Indra says to Pratardana who had asked him for a boon, "Know me only: that is what I deem most beneficial to man, that he should know me. . . . He who meditates on me as life and immortality gains his full life in this world and in heaven immortality." Eliot remarks about this passage, 'Though the relation of the devotee to the deity here is purely intellectual and not emotional, still the idea, that intellectual devotion directed to a particular deity will be rewarded, is clearly present': Eliot, *op. cit.*, p. 181. But he forgets that Indra here symbolises the highest principle discussed in the early Upaniṣads.

[2] The last *caraṇa* of this verse, *viz.*, *dhātu-prasādānmahimānamātmanaḥ*, is changed into *dhātuḥ prasādānmahimānamīśam*.

[3] *Śvet. Up.*, VI, 23—*Yasya deve parā bhaktiryathā deve tathā gurau | Tasyaite kathitā hyarthāḥ prakāśante māhātmanaḥ ||*

etymological sense of the word *Bhakti*, *viz.*, 'resorting to and then loving the thing resorted to with faith and devotion' is the central idea.[1]

The Upaniṣadic Brahman-Ātman, when conceived in the personal aspect, especially in the theistic Upaniṣads, is usually called not Deva (god), but Īśa, Īśāna, Īśvara, and latterly Parameśvara. But even then, *Śvetāśvatara* found it necessary to refer to some divine personal entity like Rudra (also mentioned under other names such as Eka deva, Mahān deva, Maheśvara, Māyī and once even Śiva: '*jñātvā śivaṃ sarvabhūteṣu gūḍhaṁ*'), who was the recipient of the homage of his devotees. In this work which has not cut itself asunder from the general body of the scheme of the early Upaniṣads ('beneath the characters of theism are discerned, half obliterated, those of pantheism and under the latter, again, those of idealism,'—*Deussen*), we are told that the knowledge alone of this one god will break up the fetters of death, and nothing will be gained by him by the learning of the Ṛk verses, who does not know him (*Yastanna veda kimṛcā kariṣyati*). But evidently such a mental attitude of the thinkers, though no doubt it bespeaks a great deal of progress towards the development of cult religions and sectarianism, was not at all truly sectarian in character. Its natural corollary, however, was the growth of the latter in which the element of *Bhakti* was the main guiding principle. The gods, round whom these cults developed, were not recruited from the orthodox Vedic Pantheon, but from quite a different source. Indra, Prajāpati, Mitra, Varuṇa, Yama, Agni and others could never effectively serve in the rôle of cult-deities, though some attempts were possibly made by those of the Vedic way of thinking to foist one or other of them as rivals to the more important cult-gods. But these, if they were ever seriously made, were destined to failure, and in the developed sectarianism of the Epic and Purāṇic periods we find several of the more important Vedic deities such as Indra, Varuṇa, Agni, Vāyu, Yama and one of the less important ones like

[1] IV, 95 ff.

Niṛṛti relegated to the comparatively insignificant position of the guardians of quarters (Dikpālas), where the highest purpose they could serve was of a mere accessory character. Some of the Vedic gods, again, like Viṣṇu, Rudra and Sūrya came to be merged in the composite cult-deities at a subsequent period, and this merger was so complete and so important for the cults themselves that some of the latter came to be designated, optionally at first, but more constantly at a later period, by the names of the Vedic counterparts of their cult-pictures (*cf.* the part played by Viṣṇu in the Bhāgavata or Pāñcarātra cult which came to be described as Vaiṣṇava at a later date). But the originals of these gods were actual human heroes like Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī (*cf.* Kṛṣṇa Devakīputra of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III. 17), Śākyamuni Gotama and Mahāvīra, or mythological beings like Śiva (Rudra-Śiva), the Yakṣas Maṇibhadra, Pūrṇabhadra and others, and the goddess Umā-Durgā-Pārvatī-Vindhyavāsinī.[1] Pāṇini in his *sūtra*, *Vāsudevārjunābhyāṃ vuñ* (IV. 3. 98) most probably refers to two sectaries who were the exclusive worshippers of the apotheosised human heroes Vāsudeva and Arjuna, of whom the former was the more honoured and more important. Patañjali's commentary on this *sūtra* fully endorses the view; but what is also very interesting is that Patañjali refers to a sect called the *Śivabhāgavatas* or devotees of Śiva, the Holy One, who carried in their hands an iron lance as an emblem of Śiva whom they worshipped.[2] The early Buddhist works on many occasions refer to the various kinds of worship that prevailed in India, especially in Central and Eastern India, at a time when Buddha preached his doctrine. R. G. Bhandarkar quotes a very interesting passage from the *Niddesa*, which furnishes us with a curious record of the various religious systems and superstitions that prevailed at the period: 'The deity of the lay followers of

[1] Elaborate use was made of the descriptions of the Vedic counterparts of the syncretic gods, thus fully substantiating the hypothesis already referred to regarding the composite culture of the post-Vedic period.
Mahābhāṣya, under Pāṇini, V. 2. 76.

the Ājīvakas is the Ājīvakas, of those of the Nighaṇṭhas is the Nighaṇṭhas, of those of the Jaṭilas is the Jaṭilas, of those of the Paribbājakas is the Paribbājakas, of those of the Avaruddhakas is the Avaruddhakas, and the deity of those who are devoted to an elephant, a horse, a cow, a dog, a crow, Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Puṇṇabhadda, Maṇibhadda, Aggi, Nāgas, Supannas, Yakkhas, Asuras, Gandhabbas, Mahārājas, Canda, Suriya, Inda, Brahmā, Deva, Diśā is the elephant, the horse, the cow, the dog, the crow, Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Puṇṇabhadda, Maṇibhadda, etc., respectively.'[1] It will be wrong to suppose that this curious assortment of worshippers of particular objects indicates all of them as separate sectaries; what is worth noting, however, is that here is an authentic presentation of a medley in which the sects of Vāsudeva, the Ājīvakas and the Nirgranthas are mixed up with the believers not only in the Vedic gods like Indra, Agni, Candra, Sūrya and others, or with those putting their faith in the efficacy of austerities and asceticism (*cf.* the Paribbājakas and the Jaṭilas), but also with the superstitious animists. The last group, however much they might be deprecated by the cultured intellectuals of the day, played no mean a part in moulding the beliefs and practices of their more advanced contemporaries. Megasthenes, as quoted by Arrian, mentions that Herakles was the special object of worship of the Sourasenoi, an Indian tribe in whose land were the great cities of Methora and Kleisobora (Mathurā and Kṛṣṇapura), and through which flowed the river Iobares (Yamunā); this is a confirmation from a foreign source regarding the existence of at least one sectary among the several named above in the fourth century B.C. in the Yamunā region[2] We shall see later on that archaeological data from the 2nd century B.C. onwards substantially corroborate the above facts.

[1] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 3.

[2] McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 201. R. G. Bhandarkar was the first to identify the tribe of the Sourasenoi with the Sātvatas, and Herakles with Vāsudeva. The Greek writers appositely designated Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa as Herakles, for both these deities were very probably apotheosised human beings.

A somewhat elaborate discussion about the origin and growth of the idea of *Bhakti* has been found necessary because the solution of the whole problem of the origin of image-worship itself principally depends on it. Some sensible objects were found to be indispensable by the various sectaries who required them as so many visible symbols for the various personal gods to whom they rendered their exclusive homage. The symbols and images in their case analogically did the same sort of service as was done by Fire (Agni) in Vedic ritualism. Fire was specially sacred to the Vedic priests, because it was the carrier of the sacrificers' oblations to their respective gods; in the case of a sectary, the image or icon or any such visible symbol of his deity was the handy medium through which he could transfer his one-souled devotion (*ekātmikā bhakti*) to his god. That was the primary purpose for which they were usually intended, though there is textual evidence regarding their being used secondarily for such purposes as *abhicāra*, etc. (*cf.* the *ābhicārika mūrtis* as described in the *Vaikhānasāgama*). The rendering of one's homage was done by various acts of *pūjā* in which images were absolutely necessary; these were *abhigamana* or going to the temple of the deity with the speech, the body and the mind centred on him, *upādāna* or collecting the materials of worship such as flowers, incense, sandal paste, offerings (*naivedya*), etc., *ijyā* or the very act of worshipping the Śri Vigraha (the auspicious body of the lord), *svādhyāya* or the muttering of the *mantra* usual to particular cult-divinities, and lastly, *yoga* or meditation.[1] The last constituent of the act of *pūjā* has got special bearing on the history of the evolution of the icons. One author tells us that the image-maker should fashion images in such a manner that they would conduce to the success of the *dhyāna-yoga*.[2] Many images are

[1] Some of the Mantras special to particular deities are (1) the twelve-syllabled Bhāgavata mantra: *Oṃ namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya*, (2) the five-syllabled Śaiva one: *Namaḥ Śivāya* and (3) the seven-syllabled Śakti mantra: *Parameśvari svāhā*.

[2] *Śukranītisāra*, Ch. IV., Section 4, 147:
Dhyānayogasya saṃsiddhyai pratimālakṣaṇaṃ smṛtam |
Pratimākārako marttyo yathādhyānarato bhavet ||

known where the deity himself is shown in the pose of a Yogī immersed in deep meditation (*cf.* the images of Jina, Buddha, Yogāsana Viṣṇu, Yogadakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva and others). A notice of a very interesting passage in the *Mahābhārata* which refers to Nārada's visit to the Badarikāśrama to see Nara and Nārāyaṇa will not be out of place here. Nārada finds the latter engaged in the act of worshipping; bewildered at this (because Nārāyaṇa was himself an object of worship), Nārada asks him about the latter's object of devotion. Then the Lord tells him that he is worshipping his original Prakṛti, the source of all that is and that is to be.[1] Here we have a textual evidence in support of deities themselves being conceived in the *dhyāna-yoga*, and their images depicted in this very pose had the practical utility of aiding the devotee to concentrate the mind on his god. The importance of such images as well as their connection with those that were discovered in the Indus Valley has been elaborately discussed by R. P. Chanda in some of his writings.[2] The true significance and purpose of the image proper of the god must be understood in this light, and this is fully emphasised by the passages appearing in such late works as *Rāmapūrvatāpanīya* and *Jābāladarśana Upaniṣads* and *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, even though some of them deprecate the practice of the persons who

[1] *Mahābhārata*, *Vaṅgavāsī* Edition, Śānti Parva, Nārāyaṇīya Parvādhyāya, ch. 334, verses, 14-45. This passage is a curious amalgam of the Sāṅkhya and the Yoga. The entity who is the object of Nara's and Nārāyaṇa's devotion is described thus: *Yattat sūkṣmamavijñeyamavyaktamacalaṃ dhruvaṃ* | *Indriyairindriyārthaiśca sarvabhūtaiśca varjitam* || *Sa hyantarātmā bhūtānāṃ kṣetrajñaśceti kathyate* | *Triguṇavyatirikto vai puruṣaśceti kalpitaḥ* || *Tasmādavyaktamutpannaṃ triguṇaṃ devijasattama* | *Avyaktā vyaktabhāvasthā yā sā prakṛtiravyayā* || *Tāṃ yonimāvayorviddhi yo'sau sadasadātmakaḥ* | *Ābābhyāṃ pūjyate so'hi daive pitrye ca kalpate* || This original Prakṛti, we are told further on, was none other than Hari.

[2] This is ably recounted in one of his latest works, *viz.*, *Mediæval Indian Sculptures in the British Museum*, Ch. I, pp. 6-10. He suggests that the 'sudden rise of the cult of the images of the Yogī in north-western India (Gandhāra and Mathura) is only a revival of an old cult of the image of the Yogī once prevalent in that region.'

offer their *bhakti* to their gods through these media.[1] But these works are mainly written from the point of view of those who firmly believed in worshipping the highest principle without the aid of any media (*nirākāropāsanā*), and the attitude of some of them was strictly non-dualist (*Śivamātmani paśyanti*).

It will be profitable to compare this view-point about the usefulness of the images with that presented in the works of the Bhāgavatas or the Pāñcarātras. We have already mentioned the significance of such words as ***vigraha, bera, tanu,*** *rūpa*, etc.; these are mostly utilised in such literature replete with sentiments of deep loving faith for the lord Vāsudeva and his principal aspects. The manner of describing euphemistically the images after due consecration as the very bodies or forms of the god is fully emphasised therein by the prescription that the cult-picture of the deity was one of his five-fold forms; they are *Para*, the highest form, ***Vyūha,*** the emanatory forms, *Vibhava*, the incarnatory forms, ***Antaryāmin,*** the lord as immanent in the universe and as the inner controller of the individual, and lastly the ***Arcā,*** the duly consecrated images. This concept of the image is based on its unique sublimation to the very position of the godhead, the object of deep loving adoration to the devotee. The process presupposes a mental preparation, a studied effort on the part of the worshipper, which culminates in the attainment of that frame of mind in which an object fashioned by human hands reaches such an august level. A concept similar to the above is essentially one of the characteristic features of most of the religious cults of India in which the *Bhakti* element was the main guiding principle. The Ālvārs or the Nāvanmārs in the south, the Vaiṣṇava or the Śaiva saints of the north

[1] *Cinmayasyādvitīyasya - niskalasyāśarīriṇaḥ | Upāsakānāṃ kāryārthaṃ Brahmaṇo rūpakalpanā (Rāmapūrvatāpanīya Upaniṣad); Śivamātmani paśyanti pratimāsu na yoginaḥ | Ajñānāṃ bhāvanārthāya pratimā parikalpitā (Jābāladarśana Upaniṣad); Evaṃ guṇānusārena rūpāṇi vividhāni ca || Kalpitāni hitārthāya bhaktānāmalpamedhasām (Mahānirvāṇa Tantra).* The last-named work thus derides the efforts of those who want to attain salvation through this method : ' *Manasā kalpitā mūrti nṛṇaṃ cenmokṣasādhanī | Svapnalabdhena rājyena rājāno mānavāstathā || Mṛcchilādhātudārvādi-mūrtāvīśvarabuddhayaḥ | Kliśyantastapasā jñānam vinā mokṣaṃ na yānti te ||*

and the Ācāryas of many of the sectarian religious systems of the early and mediæval periods throughout India were highly cultured people, but in their approach to the deity the divine image played a very important part. So, T. A. G. Rao's observation, " the Hindu śāstras prescribe image worship to weak unevolved persons in particular ", will have to be modified. It is true that the root idea of image-worship can be traced to animism, but so also can the idea of the immanence of the godhead be traced, yet in its rationalised and developed form there is very little place for crudity or savagery. It has therefore been truly remarked that " in dealing with savage ideas of the inanimate, it must be kept in mind that non-living things are worshipped or feared *not in any symbolical sense, which is altogether foreign to the lower intelligence, but as the supposed home of a spirit, or as in some sense a vehicle of power.*"[1] This symbolism is further expressed and emphasised by the usual practices of endowing the mediæval Indian images with many hands, which has been dubbed as a monstrosity by some scholars. Different explanations have been suggested by-different scholars with regard to this feature. Macdonell, for example, suggested that it was the direct outcome of the iconographers' necessity to distinguish the image of one deity from the other, when the earlier mode of doing so by the placing of mounts below them was found inadequate due to the gradual increase of the pantheon. He wanted to substantiate his view by referring to one universal feature of the multi-armed images: their natural hands were invariably to be found in such 'action-poses' as *abhaya, varada*, etc., whereas the added hands carried different implements which were, according to him, nothing but differentiating marks.[2] But this statement is difficult to accept. The alternative suggestion, that the hands and the *āyudhas*

[1] Edward Clodd, *Animism*, p. 78. *Italics are mine.*

[2] *J.R.A.S.*, 1916, pp. 127-8. Refer to A. M. Hocart's article on ' Many-armed Gods ' in *Acta Orientalia*, Vol. VII, 1929, pp. 91 ff. Hocart remarks, ' Evidently theological considerations were paramount in deciding the number of arms, and this is far more in accord with what we know of the Indian mind than Prof. Macdonell's theory.'

or implements in them portray attempts to symbolise, however ineffectively, the multifarious activities of the god, is more acceptable. T. A. G. Rao says, 'The images of the Hindu gods and goddesses are representations of the various conceptions of divine attributes. Sculpturally it may be said, the number of hands in an image represents the number of attributes belonging to the deity, and their nature is denoted by the *āyudha* held in the hand or by the pose maintained by it.'[1]

A well-executed image, if it follows the rules of proportions laid down in the Śilpaśāstras and is pleasing to the eye, invites the deity to reside in it and is particularly auspicious to its worshipper.[2] But deities were not always iconically represented ; over and above their concrete representations in anthropomorphic and, rarely, theriomorphic forms, they could also be figured in an aniconic manner. The latter mode is undoubtedly reminiscent of an earlier practice. In India, iconism and aniconism existed side by side from a very early period, and this feature is also present even in modern times. Buddha could be represented by means of such symbols as the Bodhi tree with Vajrāsana beneath it, his foot prints, the *stūpa*, etc., which were directly associated with him ; in the Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda sculptures of the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., we find him being depicted iconically and aniconically at the same time, though in the earlier Buddhist art of Central India he used to be represented only in the latter manner. Similarly, Brahmanical cult deities could as well be worshipped in the Śālagrāmas, the Bāṇa-liṅgas and the Yantras, as in images ; but here, however, their association with the symbols was not so direct. Attempts were not wanting to account for this connection by

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, p. 27. The weapons or attributes, in the case of some at least of the Brahmanical images, have also their bases in the anthropomorphic descriptions of their Vedic counterparts.

[2] *Ābhirūpyācca bimbānāṃ devaḥ sānnidhyamṛcchati (Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra)*; *Śukranītisāra*, IV. Sec. 4 : 152-3 :—*Yathoktāvayavaiḥ pūrṇā puṇyadā sumanoharā* ' *Anyathāyurdhanaharā nityaṃ duḥkhavivarddhinī* ‖

the fabrication of mythological stories.[1] The Śālagrāmas, Bāṇa-liṅgas and Yantras are primarily associated with the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Śākta cults respectively. Then, there are various sacred stones scattered over different parts of India, which are taken to stand for one or other of the cult divinities. It has been shown that rude stone monuments consisting of menhirs, dolmens, cairns, and cromlechs distributed over parts of Europe, Western Asia and India are essentially sepulchral in character.[2] The Indian phalli, especially their early specimens, portray this feature to a very great extent. Many instances are known, in India of ancient and modern times, of stones being regarded as aniconic representations of the cult-deities. The well-known Śākta tradition about the severed limbs of Satī falling in different parts of India and about the latter being regarded as so many *pīṭhasthānas*, particularly sacred to the Śakti-worshippers, should be noted in this connection. In modern times, the most important objects of worship in many of these shrines are usually stone blocks covered over with red cloth, which are described as this or that limb of the goddess. It is interesting to observe here that Hiuen Thsang records in his *Si-yu-ki* some useful details about a great mountain in ancient Gandhāra, ' which had a likeness (or image) of Maheśvara's spouse Bhīmā-devī of dark-blue stone. According to local accounts this was a natural image of the goddess ; it was a great resort of devotees from all parts of India. At the foot of the mountain was a temple of Maheśvara-deva in which the ash-smearing Tīrthikas performed much worship.' Watters remarks, ' The image or likeness of Bhīmā-devī here mentioned was apparently a dark-blue rock in the mountain supposed to have resemblance to that Goddess.'[3] Watters' observation

[1] *Cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, pp. 8 ff. Rao gives us an elaborate account of these aniconic symbols.

[2] Grant Allen, The *Evolution of the Idea of God*, pp. 68 ff.

[3] Watters, ' *On Yuan Chwang*,' Vol. I, pp. 221-22. The Bhīmā-devī shrine is evidently identical with the Bhīmāsthāna beyond Pañcanada mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, Vanaparva, Ch. 82, verses 84-85, and probably also with Bhīṣaṇa of the *Mahāmāyūrī* text. According to the *Mahābhārata*, there

about the resemblance is immaterial; but, what is of importance here is that we find in it an authentic reference to a *svayambhūmūrti* of the goddess in the 7th century A.D. Now, these objects of worship are principally aniconic stones, and numerous textual references to the self-wrought phalli (*Svayambhū liṅgas*) have been quoted by Gopinath Rao in his work (section on Liṅgas). It seems that sometimes these aniconic objects were held in more veneration than the images fashioned by human hands, for the list supplied by Rao proves that claims were put forward on behalf of man-made Śiva-liṅgas to be regarded as *Svayambhū* ones. Then there are sacred trees and other objects which were also held in high respect on account of their association with certain spiritual entities, and in the subsequent religious history of India, these were specially associated with one or other of the cult divinities. Reference may be made to the high esteem in which the *bael* and *tulasī* trees were held by the devotees of Śiva and Viṣṇu respectively, and also to the *sthala-vṛkṣas* associated with particular shrines ; numismatic data, as I shall show afterwards, seem to prove that more or less similar was the case in much earlier times. The association of the Aśvattha (*Ficus religiosa*) with Sākyamuni Buddha and that of the various other trees like Puṇḍarīka, Sirīṣa, Pāṭali, Nyagrodha and others with his predecessors were not the special feature of the Buddhist creed alone; these Bodhi trees were the direct descendants of the *Caitya Vṛkṣas* (*rukkhacetiyāni*) of more primitive times. The trees and branches appearing so frequently in the numerous seals discovered in the Indus Valley had most probably some cult significance of this character.

It is time now to discuss some of the literary data with regard to the prevalence of images in the post-Vedic period.

was a Yonitīrtha there, a dip into whose *kuṇḍa* was regarded as highly auspicious in character. These details are important for the religious history of India; the Yonipīṭha is now at Kāmākhyā, near Gauhati, Assam, and the particular Bhairava of the Devī is Umānanda on a rock in the midst of the Brahmaputra near by. In the 7th century A.D. there was a similar shrine in the heart of Gandhāra with the adjacent shrine of the Bhairava (Śiva). For detailed discussions about these, *cf.* my article in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, 1938, pp. 751-3.

Incidental reference has already been made to one or two among them in the first few pages of the second chapter of this work. But, a collected presentation of some of those as well as several other data will be necessary for the better understanding of the topic under discussion here. Pāṇini's *sūtra, jīvikārthe cāpaṇye* (V. 3. 99) as explained by the later commentators is interesting ; it gives us positive information about the concrete representations of deities in the 5th century B.C.[1] But from this cryptic *sūtra*, we can have no idea about the kind of deities whose *pratikṛtis* were made means of livelihood by a certain class of people. It can justifiably be presumed, however, that these were not the orthodox Vedic gods, but were popular objects of worship like the Yakṣas and the Nāgas; they could also be even of Vāsudeva, Arjuna and the Mahārājas (Kubera, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Viḍūdhaka and Virūpākṣa, the guardian deities of the Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western quarters respectively—this is A. K. Coomaraswamy's interpretation, and it seems to be the correct one), because Pāṇini under IV. 3. 95 (*yeṣāṃ bhaktir yap*) lays down rules for the formation of words denoting the *bhaktas* or the worshippers of Vāsudeva, Arjuna and the Mahārājas (IV. 3. 98 : *Vāsudevārjunābhyāṃ vūñ* and IV. 3. 99 : *Mahārājāṭṭhañ*). But Patañjali is much more informative on this matter in his comment on Pāṇini's *sūtra* (V. 3. 99). His *bhāṣya* reads :—*apaṇya ityucyate tatredaṃ na sidhyati* । *Śivaḥ Skandaḥ Viśākha iti* । *kiṃ kāraṇaṃ* ! *Mauryairhiraṇyārthibhirarcāḥ prakalpitāḥ* । *bhavet tāsu na syāt* । *yāstvetāḥ sampratipūjārthāstāsu bhaviṣyati*. This passage is highly important, because it throws a flood of light on our problem. He mentions a few of the gods, *viz.*, Śiva, Skanda, Viśākha whose images were being made for worship at his time (*sampratipūjārthā*); again, his assertion that the Mauryas devised the expedient of replenishing their royal coffer by the selling of images

[1] *Cf.* H. C. Raychaudhuri's discussion about Pāṇini's date in his *Materials for the Study of the Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Sect*, Second Edition, pp. 24-30.

shows that images were in great demand among their subjects; lastly, it is significant that none of the three gods mentioned above can be described as Vedic in character. Such texts as the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Manusaṃhitā* also supply us some valuable data about the subject. Kauṭilya, in his chapter on *Dūrganiveśa* (Buildings within the Fort) says, 'In the centre of the city, the apartments of gods, such as Aparājita, Apratihata, Jayanta, Vaijayanta, Śiva, Vaiśravaṇa, Aśvina, and the abode of Goddess Madirā shall be situated. In the corners, the guardian deities of the ground shall be appropriately set up.'[1] These are evident allusions to the shrines of the above-named gods, and it is presumable that the images of the latter were enshrined in them; an analysis of the names shows that only one among them (or possibly two, if Vaijayanta be taken to be a synonym of Indra), *viz.*, Aśvi (the twin gods Aśvins) is distinctively Vedic in character. Vaiśravaṇa is the same as Kubera, the lord of the Yakṣas, Jayanta is most probably the same as mentioned in the *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra* (VII. 20. 3, Jayanta in this passage should not have been translated as 'the conqueror' as it has been done by Max Müller in the S. B. E. series) already noted in the second chapter; the image of Śiva is referred to in the *Mahābhāṣya*, here, and probably also in the *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra* noted above (Īśāna's image is mentioned there and Īśāna is the name of one of the aspects of Śiva); the goddess Madirā may be the same as Mīḍhūṣī mentioned in the latter work in the same context and translated by Max Müller as 'the bountiful one.'[2] Kauṭilya also refers to the figures of the

[1] *Arthaśāstra*, translation by R. Shamasastry, 2nd Edition, p. 59. The translator notes that 'the worship of the Aśvins and Vaiśravaṇa seems to have been prevalent at the time of this work.' The original text reads :—*Aparājitāpratihatajayantavaijayantakoṣṭhakān Śivavaiśravaṇāśvi śrīmadirāgṛhaṃ ca puramadhye kārayet* | *Koṣṭhakālayeṣu yathoddeśaṃ vāstudevatāḥ sthāpayet* ||

[2] In the *Ap. Gr. S.*, these three deities, *viz.*, Īśāna, Mīḍhūṣi and Jayanta are mentioned together; Haradatta explained them as images of the three gods. *Hiranyakeśin, Gr. Sūtra* (II. 3. 8), in connection with the Śūlagava sacrifice meant for Rudra for averting cattle diseases, furnishes us with the interesting fact that the cow (the consort) of the spit-ox (*i.e.*, the ox to be symbolically sacrificed) and her calf are euphemistically described as Mīḍhūṣi and Jayanta respectively; the sacrificer then prays to the three gods, *viz.*, Īśāna, Mīḍhūṣi and Jayanta, to touch the three beasts. If Mīḍhūṣi and Madirā be identical, then both of them are to be regarded as the consorts of Śiva; one of the names of Śiva is Mīḍhūṣa and Madirā is one of the synonyms of Durgā-Ambikā.

"goddesses and altars which were to be carved on wooden door frames of the royal underground chamber" (*Vāsagṛhaṃ bhūmigṛhaṃ vā āsannakāṣṭhacaityadevatāvāhānadvāraṃ*, etc.: Kauṭilya on *Niśāntapraṇidhiḥ*); these figures had most probably protective utility and acted as sorts of charms, and were not meant for worship. In the chapter on *Apasarpapraṇidhiḥ* Kauṭilya refers to the images and flags of the gods (*devadhvajapratimābhirvā*) in the guise of which weapons will be supplied by the spies outside to the spies inside the enemy's fort; in the same section we are told about the procession of gods (*i.e.*, the images of them—*daivatapretakāryotsavasamājeṣu*), etc., which would be taken advantage of by the spies in harming the enemy. Very great importance is assigned to the images of the gods in *Manusmṛti* and there are various passages in the work which lay down that *daivatam* (images of gods) are to be circumambulated (IV, 39), that one should not voluntarily step over the shadow of the gods (IV, 130), that at the *parvans* one should go to the images for protection (IV, 153), and that he who destroys a bridge, the flag of a temple (really the votive column in front of it), a pole (really a pillar) or images (*saṃkramadhvajayaṣṭīnāṃ pratimānāṃ ca bhedakaḥ*) shall repair the whole (damages) and pay 500 (*paṇas*) as fine (IX, 285). Manu gives us another interesting information that though images were highly venerated by the people in general, temple-priests, whose duty was to minister to these icons, were greatly deprecated, and they were placed in the same class with the Brahmans who earned their livelihood by medical practice, selling of meat and trading (*Cikitsakān devalakān māṃsavikrayiṇastathā* | *Vipaṇena ca jīvanto varjyāḥ syurhavyakavyayoḥ*; III, 152). The same social stigma attaches to the temple-priests in modern times also; it can be explained by the suggestion that it was so because

these people prostituted their *bhakti* by making it a means of their livelihood. This is supported by a verse in the *Nārada Pañcarātra* (*Bhāradvāja Saṃhitā*, IV, 29) which says that one should never make the images of gods the means of their livelihood (*na cāpyarcopajīvikaḥ*). The whole verse reads :—*Na ca mantropajīvā syānnacāpyarcopajīvikaḥ* l *Nāniveditabhogaśca na ca nindyanivedakaḥ*. The two texts, *viz.*, *Arthaśāstra* and *Manusmṛti*, thus furnish us with some important data regarding the prevalence of image-worship in India of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D., if not of an earlier period. The *Mahābhārata*, in like manner, refers often to the images of the gods, especially in connection with various Tīrthas (sacred places). There was an image of Viṣṇu named Śālagrāma in the Puṇḍarīka tīrtha (*Śālagrāma iti khyāto Viṣṇuradbhutakarmakaḥ* ; III, 84, 124) ; in the Jyeṣṭhila tīrtha were the images of Viśveśvara and his consort (*Tatra Viśveśvaraṃ dṛṣṭvā devyā saha mahādyutim* l *Mitrāvaruṇayorlokānāpnoti puruṣarṣabha* ; III, 84, 135) ; these, however, might have been aniconic—the former, a Śālagrāma, and the latter, the phallic emblem of Śiva, in which Śiva and Umā are symbolically represented. Reference to the image of Nandīśvara is to be found in XIII, 25, 21 (*Nandīśvarasya mūrtiṃ tu dṛṣṭvā mucyeta kilviṣaiḥ*) ; in the Mataṅgāśrama near Dharmaprastha was an image of Dharma, touching whom one would attain spiritual rewards, equivalent to those of an aśvamedha-sacrifice (*Dharmaṃ tatrābhisaṃspṛśya vājīmedhamavāpnuyāt* ; III, 84, 102) ; an image of Brahmā is probably referred to in III, 84, 103-4 (*Tato gaccheta rājendra Brahmasthānamanuttamam* l *Tatrābhigamya rājendra Brahmāṇaṃ puruṣarṣabha* l *Rājasūyāśvamedhābhyāṃ phalaṃ vindati mānavaḥ*). Numerous such instances can be quoted from other sections also of the epic literature, but what is of special significance, in this connection, is that the results to be attained by a pious person visiting these tīrthas or worshipping the images therein are often estimated in terms of the fruits attainable by the performance of such Vedic sacrifices as Agniṣṭoma, Jyotiṣṭoma, Aśvamedha,

Rājasūya, etc. A careful search among the early literature of the Buddhists and Jainas,—sectaries heterodox from the point of view of a Vedic initiate, throws much light on the form of worship prevalent in this period—in which both iconic as well as aniconic symbols played a great part.

It is interesting to note that Quintus Curtius records that an image of ' Hercules ' was carried in front of the army of Porus as he advanced against Alexander. Coomaraswamy thinks that this may have been an image of Śiva or of a Yakṣa.[1] The Greek author Stobaeus, flourishing *circa* 500 A.D., quotes a passage from Bardasanes who reports the visit of an Indian to Syria in the time of Antoninus of Emesa (218-222 A.D.). It contains a striking reference to an image of Arddhanārīśvara (the androgynous composite image of Śiva and Durgā ; Fergusson, *H.I.E.A.*, p. 54). Hiuen Thsang frequently refers to Brahmanical shrines and sometimes also to the images worshipped there by the sectaries in his *Si-yu-ki*.

It has been shown above how some of the post-Vedic literature of India furnish us with valuable data regarding the prevalence of concrete representations of gods as the objects of worship in India during a few centuries before and after the Christian era. It may be argued that all of these passages do not definitely prove that actual images were being worshipped, and some of them may only refer to the aniconic symbols that might have served the same purpose as well. Archæological data will now help us to throw fresh light on this question, and a careful study of these, divisible into three groups, *viz.*, epigraphic, monumental and numismatic, will show that in India of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period, worship was being conducted by the various sectaries among her people through media, both iconic and aniconic in character. In some cases the data

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 42, fn. 5. But ' Hercules ' in this passage may also have meant Kṛṣṇa ; we have seen above that Heracles' name is mentioned in connection with the Saurasenas and Mathura by Megasthenes. Dionysios is the Greek counterpart of Śiva.

supply us with direct evidence while in others with indirect. Before a reference is made to a few inscriptions associated with one particular sect, it will be of interest to refer to the interpretation of one or two passages of Aśoka's edicts, which have been taken by some scholars as alluding to the representations of divine figures. In the first part of the Fourth Rock Edict of Aśoka occurs a passage which has been translated by Hultzsch as follows :—' showing the people representations of aerial chariots, representations of elephants, masses of fire and other divine figures ' (*Vimāna-darsaṇā ca hastida(r)saṇā ca agikhaṃdhāni ca aññāni ca divyāni rūpāni dasayitpā janaṃ*). He suggests that the figures of elephants stood for the celestial elephants, the usual vehicles of the four Mahārājas or Lokapālas, mentioned above: *agikhaṃdhāni*, according to him, may be taken in the sense of radiant beings of another world, and *divyāni rūpāni* (identical in sense with *deva* in the Rupnath edict, E) means the gods in effigy (*i.e.*, the images of the gods). It may be observed in this connection that the same sense is indicated by the word *daivata*, used in the *Gṛhyasūtras* and some Smṛti works, as is done by the words *divyāni rupāni* and *deva* found in Aśoka's edicts. By exhibition of these objects in large gatherings of his subjects (these *samājas* were considered meritorious by Aśoka), Aśoka desired to remind them of the gods whose abodes they would be able to reach by the zealous practice of *dhamma*.[1] These divine images and other representations had merely edificatory value and were not objects of regular worship in shrines.

Several pre-Christian epigraphic records, however, like the Ghosuṇḍi and the Besnagar ones, refer to Bhāgavata shrines. The former, discovered on the wall of a *bāoli* (deep masonry well) in the village of Ghosuṇḍi, originally hailed from Nāgarī, 4 miles to the south-west of it, in the old Udaypur State in Rajputana; Nāgarī has been correctly identified with ancient Madhyamikā on the basis of numismatic evidence. Further discoveries of two other

[1] Hultzsch, CII, Vol. I, Girnar Rock Edict, p. 7, fn. 7.

copies of the same record (the last made in 1934-35 by the Government Epigraphist) have enabled D. R. Bhandarkar to present to us a complete reading of the three-line inscription which runs thus :—

(1) *Kāritoyaṃ rājñā Bhāgavatena Gājāyanena Pārāśarī putreṇa Sa—*

(2) *rvatātena Asvamedha-yājina bhagava(d)bhyāṃ Saṃkarṣaṇa-Vāsūdevābhyāṃ*

(3) *anihatābhyāṃ sarveśvarābhyāṃ pūjāśilāprākāro Nārāyaṇarāṭikā.* It has been translated by him as follows :—' (*This*) enclosing wall round the stone (*object*) of worship, called Nārāyaṇa-vāṭikā (Compound) for the divinities Saṃkarṣaṇa-Vāsudeva who are unconquered and are lords of all (has been caused to be made) by (the king) Sarvatāta, a Gājāyana and son of (a lady) of the Parāśara-gotra, who is a devotee of Bhagavat (Viṣṇu) and has performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice.'[1] Here is an undoubted reference to a shrine of the two gods round which a stone enclosure was built in the 1st century B.C. (that is the date assigned by Bhandarkar to the records, though previous opinion was to place them somewhat earlier); but we are not certain about the nature of the objects which were enshrined there J. C. Ghosh suggested that these were two *śālagrāma* stones (*pūjā-śilā*) corresponding to the varieties of Saṃkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva as laid down in the *Agnipurāṇa*. Bhandarkar is justified in criticising this view and in his interpretation of *pūjā-śilā-prākāra*; but his own suggestion that the objects enshrined were ' the footprints of the two brother gods carved in stone ', on the basis of his discovery in the western part of the wall at Hāthibāḍā (Nāgarī) of the inscription *Śrī-Viṣṇu-pādābhyāṃ* in characters of the 7th century A.D., is also not convincing. In course of his excavations at Nāgarī, he found in the western half of the Hāthībāḍā enclosure the remains of a brick platform which ran from east to west; he says there is no evidence of any superstructure on it, which fact also led him to arrive at the

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXII, p. 204.

above conclusion. The superstructure may have been a wooden one, as he himself suggests, or even made of brick, all traces of which may have disappeared in course of time. A shrine was thus most presumably on the spot, and it is extremely probable that the objects of worship there were the two images of the gods. We shall presently see that there are other archaeological data which conclusively prove the existence of figure sculptures of the gods in this period. The above inscription also incidentally shows the composite character of the religious practice of the higher section of the Indians; king Sarvatāta, belonging to the Bhāgavata creed and erecting the enclosure round the shrine of his chosen gods, had already performed the Vedic Aśvamedha sacrifice (*cf.* the practice of the imperial Guptas). The well-known Khambaba pillar inscription at Besnagar of the 2nd century B.C. records the erection of a Garuḍa-dhvaja in honour of *devadeva* Vāsudeva by 'Bhāgavata Heliodora (Heliodorus), son of Diya (Dion) and an inhabitant of Taxila, who came as an ambassador from the Greek king Antialkidas to king Kāsīputra Bhāgabhadra of Vidiśā.' It can very well be presumed that this Garuḍa column was erected in front of the shrine of Vāsudeva who was, to this Greek convert to Bhāgavatism, the God of the gods, the chosen one; the name Garuḍa also shows that, by this time, the association of the sectarian god Vāsudeva with the Vedic Viṣṇu (*cf.* my previous observations about Sun conceived as the bird Garutman and Viṣṇu as one of the Ādityas) had already been established. That there were other shrines of Vāsudeva at Besnagar is proved by a fragmentary inscription on the shaft of another octagonal Garuḍa column found in a narrow street of Bhilsa, evidently hailing from Besnagar; it records that 'this Garuḍa column of the excellent temple of the Bhagavat was erected by Gautamīputra..., a Bhāgavata, in the 12th year after the installation of Mahārāja Bhāgavata' (*Gotamiputena bhāgavatena... Bhagavato prāsādottamasa Garuḍadhvaja kārito dvādaśavasābhiṣite....Bhāgavate ma...*). So, there cannot be any doubt with regard to the existence of the shrines

of Bhagavat before which these votive columns were erected (this was also a common custom in the mediaeval period and is still pursued). In these excellent temples (*uttama prāsāda*) must have been enshrined objects of worship which were most presumably images. A few of the seven Brāhmī inscriptions from Mathura and its vicinity, edited by H. Lüders in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, have special bearing on the subject at issue (some of these inscriptions were previously edited, but Lüders suggested improved readings for them). The Mora Well Inscription of the time of Mahākṣatrapa Rajuvula's son Swāmi (Mahākṣatrapa Śoḍāsa) records the establishment of the images of the worshipful pañcavīras of the Vṛṣṇis in the stone shrine...; these images are called 'five objects of adoration made of stone radiant, as it were, with highest beauty...' The part of the original, translated here, reads—'(*i*) *Mahākṣatrapasa Rājūvulasa putrasa svāmi...(ii) bhagavatāṃ vṛṣṇīnāṃ pamcavīrānāṇi pratimāḥ śailadevagri...(iv) ārcādeśāṃ śailaṃ paṃca jvalata iva paramavapuṣā.....*'. Here, we find the use of the words *pratimā* and *arcā* used to denote the stone images of the five Vṛṣṇi heroes, who were tentatively identified by Lüders with the help of Alsdorf with the 'five great heroes (*Baladevapāmokkhā pañca mahāvīrā*) of the Jain canonical list, *viz.*, Baladeva, Akrūra, Anādhṛṣṭi, Sāraṇa and Viduratha.' Lüders even suggested that the images of three male persons actually found at Mora, probably of a considerably earlier date than the Kushan period, were three of the five statues whose installation is recorded in the inscription.[1] But it has been conclusively proved by the present writer that the five Vṛṣṇi heroes mentioned thus in the inscription as well as in many Jaina

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 194 ff. Reading the second line as *Bhagavato Vṛishṇeḥ paṃcavirāṇāṃ pratimāḥ*, R. P. Chanda understood 'the line as referring not only to the images of the five Pāṇḍavas but also to an image of the blessed or divine Vṛṣṇi, *i.e.*, of Kṛishṇa-Vāsudeva, who belonged to the Vṛṣṇi branch of the Yādava tribe.' The inscribed stone slab was, according to him, 'one of the pavement slabs of a big temple in which the images of Kṛishṇa and the five Pāṇḍava brothers were enshrined.' R. P. Chanda, *Archaeology and Vaishṇava Tradition*, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 5, pp. 166-67.

works as *Baladeva pāmokkhā pañcamahāvīrā* really stand for Saṃkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Sāmba and Aniruddha, all well-known and closely connected members of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty. It was the images of these Vṛṣṇi-vīras that were enshrined in a stone temple (*śailadevagṛha*) by a lady named Toṣā, probably of Śaka extraction. A *Vāyupurāṇa* passage describes them as *manuṣyaprakṛti* devas (deities originally human by nature ', *i.e.*, ' deified human beings '), and names them in the correct dynastic order (Chapter 97, verses 1-4). It may be said incidentally that these deified Vṛṣṇi-vīras, or exactly four of them—Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, were endowed with special sanctity and regarded as four primary Vyūhas of the highest god Para Vāsudeva in the tenet of the developed Pāñcarātra cult (for a detailed discussion about all this, *cf.* *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. X, pp. 65-8.

The second inscription is of a very fragmentary character; it was also edited by Lüders in this series, and it belongs to the time of Kanishka. It contains in the third line the only legible words *Toṣāye paṭimā*, interpreted by him as an image of Toṣā, perhaps the same as Toṣā of the other record just referred to (line three of which reads—*yas-Toṣāyāḥ śailaṃ śrīmadgṛhamatulamudadhasamadhāra*). He tentatively suggested that this image of Toṣā, about a century later than the first inscription, was erected by some one of her descendants at her shrine (*cf.* line 3 of the 1st inscription just quoted) as an act of posthumous honour, about a hundred years after her death.[1] If Lüders' interpretation of the inscribed statue is accepted, then we have here a further epigraphic as well as monumental evidence regarding the erection of secular statues which were objects of honour; reference has already been made by me to the Mat statue of the Kushan king Vima Kadphises in a previous chapter. Inscriptions Nos. V and VI, edited by Lüders, further strengthen the view that the custom of erecting

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 200-02. He offered this explanation, for there was absolutely nothing to show that the statue was meant for a goddess or a Yakṣī or a Nāga woman.

portrait statues was much in vogue among the foreign chiefs of Mathura during the Kushan period; the former incised on the pedestal of an image from Ganeshra refers to the image of the great general Ulana (*Mahadaṃḍanāyakasya..... Ulānasya paṭimā*) while the latter alludes to...*ṇasya pratimā*.

The last inscription in this list, found incised on a door-jamb from Mathura and at first edited by R. P. Chanda in the *M.A.S.I.*, No. 5, pp. 168-73 and plates XXV-XXVI, also fragmentary in character, records the gift of a *toraṇa*, *vedikā* (railing) and a third object (restored by Chanda as *catuḥśālam*; Lüders, however, suggests *devakulaṃ* or *śailam*) in the Mahāsthāna (a large temple or sanctuary, Lüders) of Bhagavat Vāsudeva, during the time of Mahākṣatrapa Śoḍasa. Lüders suggested the possibility of this inscribed door-jamb originally belonging to the Bhagavata sanctuary referred to in the Mora well inscription; if we assume with him that the temple mentioned in the Mathura door-jamb record was enlarged or embellished during the reign of Śoḍasa by a person, a Hindu high official in the service of the Mahākṣatrapa (the treasurer of Soḍasa mentioned in the inscription No. 82 in Lüders' list of Brahmi inscriptions was a Brahman), then it further increases the age of the Vasudeva shrine in the locality. The Mora well record also, as we have seen above, refers to the Vāsudeva shrine there having been adorned with the images of the Pancavıras of the Vrsnis. It will be needless to collect further epigraphic data at this stage to prove convincingly the existence of shrines, erected by various sectaries, not only Brahmanical but also Buddhist and Jain, in the centuries just preceding the Christian era and succeeding it, and it is not presumptuous to contend that many, if not all, had divine images enshrined in them. Thus, here we find a remarkable corroboration from this branch of archaeology about the nature of the far-reaching changes which were being introduced in the religious practice of the Indians.

Several objects of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian periods furnish us with valuable data regarding our subject. Mention may be made here first of the broken

figure of probably a Jaina Tīrthaṃkara found in course of excavations at a place called Lohanipur near Patna (Bihar). It is shown in the nude, and it bears a very high polish; on this and other grounds, it has been dated in the Maurya period by many scholars (J.B.O.R.S., Vol. XXIII, pp. 130-2 and pls.). From the so-called Vedic Śmaśāna mound at Lauriya Nandangarh, excavated by T. Bloch long ago, was found among other objects a very small gold-leaf with the figure of a female carved on it. Bloch described it as a representation of the Vedic Earth goddess (Pṛthivī) to whose care were assigned the remains of the dead by his relations. He ascribed a great antiquity to these remains; but recent criticism as well as excavations conducted by the archaeological department at the locality has disproved certain conclusions of the earlier archaeologist. I have already referred to the interpretation of the gold plaque by Coomaraswamy, and if we accept his suggestion, then it seems to have been some sort of a cult object. Reference may also be made here to the unique gold plaque in the collection of R. K. Jalan of Patna; K. P. Jayaswal recognised in the two figures standing side by side, one male and the other female, the two cult deities Hara and Pārvatī. He was of opinion that it ought to be dated in the Maurya period.[1] Several of the animal figures carved on the capitals of the Aśokan columns have been taken by some scholars to stand for gods in animal form; a suggestion has been made that the figures of the elephant, bull, lion and horse appearing on the abacus of the Sarnath lion capital represent the cult gods in theriomorphic forms.[2] It is not certain whether this suggestion is correct; if it is so, then they are not objects of worship in

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. II, p. 1, pl. I. But justifiable doubts have been expressed by competent scholars with regard to the genuineness of this metal plaque.

[2] According to T. Bloch these four figures symbolise the divinities Indra, Śiva, Dūrgā and Sūrya whose vāhanas these animals are, indicating their subordination to the Buddha and his Law; *Z.D.M.G.*, LXII, 1908, pp. 653-6. B. Majumdar thinks that they represent the four principal events of Buddha's life; *A Guide to Sarnath*, p. 81. Bell found these animals carved on some moonstones in Ceylon and on certain pillars at Anuradhapura; *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon*, 1896, p. 16.

their present setting, their rôle having been changed from that of the worshipped to the one of worshippers. It has been shown what use was made by Aśoka of the divine figures (*divyāni rūpāni*) in inculcating the law of *dhamma* among his subjects; the devas in animal forms are particularly associated with the wheel which symbolises the wheel of Law (*Dharmacakra*). But certain other well-known figures, the free-standing statues, some of them belonging to the Maurya or the Śuṅga period as their technique and the polish attaching to them show, were undoubtedly venerated by a large section of the Indian people. The inscriptions in the back of the two Patna statues, exhibited in the Indian Museum, are difficult of correct decipherment; the attempts by Jayaswal to read the names of two Śaiśunāga kings as Udayī and Nandivardhana were not upheld by many scholars, and few now accept his interpretation of these two, and of another inscribed figure from Parkham. The inscription on the last statue is also fragmentary and very difficult of correct reading; but the character of the three as well as some other uninscribed ones like the Besnagar and Didarganj female figures and the head and torso of a colossal sculpture, all fully in the round, has been disclosed by the clear inscription on the pedestal of another similar statue of a slightly later date (1st century B.C.), which was discovered by M. B. Garde at Pawāyā, in Gwalior State, Central India. There cannot be any doubt that all the above-mentioned figures, both male and female, belong to the same category, and if we can find a clue to the identity of one among them, the others will also be identified with its help. The part of the inscription on the Pawāyā sculpture, which is the required clue, reads: '*Gauṣṭhyā Māṇibhadrabhaktā garbhasukhitāḥ Bhagavato Māṇibhadrasya pratimā pratiṣṭhāpayaṃti*' (the image of Bhagavān Maṇibhadra is being established by the guild of the worshippers of Maṇibhadra). Certain Buddhist and Jaina texts clearly lay down that Maṇibhadra was the name of a Yakṣa; *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (I. 10, 4), for example, refers to the Maṇimālā Caitya in Magadha as the haunt of the Yaksa

Maṇibhadra; and 'the *Sūrya Prajñapti*, an ancient Jaina text, tells us that a Maṇibhadra Caitya stood to the north-east of the city named Mithilā, the ancient capital of Tirhut.'[1] In the *Mahāmāyūrī* list of the Yakṣas, giving us the names of the tutelary divinities of particular cities and places of India, Purṇabhadra and Maṇibhadra, two brother Yakṣas, are described as the local objects of worship in Brahmavatī.[2] Maṇibhadra in the above inscription is distinctly described as *Bhagavat* which shows that he was an object of worship; it has already been shown that an early Buddhist text, *viz.*, the *Niddesa* commentary, refers to the worshippers of Purṇabhadra and Maṇibhadra as of other deities. The name Kunika is unanimously read by scholars on the so-called statue of Manasā Devī at Mathura, which is described in the inscription as Yakṣi Lāyāva, whose image was made for the sons of Sa, by Nāka, pupil of Kunika.[3] The last-named Mathura image is probably to be dated in the Maurya or in the early Suṅga period. Coomaraswamy refers to another Yaksa figure found at Deoriya, also of the same age, in his *Origin of the Buddha Image*, Boston Museum Fine Arts Bulletin, 1927, pl. 4, fig. 47. The fact, however, that some of these Yaksa statues (one of the

[1] R. P. Chanda, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 30, p. 7. He further informs us 'In the Vedic literature, the term Yaksa does not occur as the name of a class of superhuman beings and Kubera Vaisravaṇa (the king of the Yaksas according to the Buddhist and post-Vedic Brāhmaṇic literature) is the king of the Raksas.' But Coomaraswamy says that the word occurs several times in the *Rgveda*, *Atharvaveda*, the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upanisads*; in these early allusions, a dual attitude is recognisable—one of fear and dislike, the other of respect. The first reflected merely an Aryan dislike and distrust of aboriginal deities, while the second, from the association of the idea of the tree of life, presents in certain Vedic passages the Yakṣas who are primarily vegetation spirits, as guardians of the vegetative source of life; *Yakṣas*, Pt. II, pp. 1-2.

[2] *Journal Asiatique*, 1915, *Mahāmāyūrī*, edited with introduction and notes by Sylvain Lévi, p. 38. *Maṇibhadro Brahmavatyāṃ Pūrṇabhadraśca bhrātarau.* The location of Brahmavatī is unknown. Lévi suggests that the city might have been in the region of Varṇu and Gandhāra.

[3] The pedestal inscription was read and interpreted by R. P. Chanda in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1922-23, p. 165. If this reading is correct, then both Nāka and Kunika appear to be the names of two early Indian sculptors, like Amrita and Indranīlamaṇi, two Caudian sculptors of the mediaeval period; the latter will be referred to again in Chapter V of this book.

male ones from Patna in the Indian Museum and the Didarganj Yakṣinī) hold *chaurīs* (fly-whisks) in one of their hands has led R. P. Chanda to conclude that all of them 'were evidently intended for decorative purposes' and 'were originally attached to *Caitya* trees or *stūpas*' (M.A.S.I. No. 30, p. 37). He wants to substantiate his view with a reference to the 'disposition of the images of the Yakṣas, Nāgas and Devatās on the railing of the *stūpa* of Bharhut and on the old railing round the Bodhi tree at Bodh-Gaya.' But this conclusion can hardly be accepted; to think of these huge stone figures in the round as mere accessories, when we find Maṇibhadra being described as Bhagavat and when we see that these divinities, ardently worshipped by their *bhaktas*, are given the rôle of accessories only in the Buddhist monuments, where they themselves are the worshippers of the Master, is unjustified. The Deoriya figure wears a turban and is sheltered by an umbrella; Coomaraswamy does not exclude the possibility of its being a royal statue. But so striking an affinity exists among these sculptures that there can be very little doubt about their being all regarded as Yakṣas, who were the cult deities of a large section of the Indians. The yak-tail (*cāmara*) is not perhaps a distinctive mark of secondary rank in these early statues; it became so in much later reliefs connected with the cults recognised by the orthodox section, where it is placed in the hands of some of the accessory figures of the central cult image. Among the various auspicious signs mentioned in the Jaina *Kalpasūtra*, yak-tail is one, and it is sometimes regarded as an attribute of a Cakravartin. The Maṇibhadra statue also seems to have held a yak-tail in its right hand, while the water or nectar vessel in its left hand is a common attribute placed in the hands of many cult deities like Siva and the future Buddha Maitreya. Coomaraswamy has amassed a wealth of textual evidence in support of their intimate association with the element of *bhakti* and *pūjā* in Indian religion.[1] He has also collected a number of texts

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Part I, pp. 24-28.

containing references to the shrines and temples of the Yakṣas, the former sometimes meaning no more than a sacred tree or a tree with an altar while the latter referring to structural buildings with images enshrined in them. He rightly observes that the existence of image (and Yakṣa images are some of the oldest known images in India) in every case implies the existence of temples and cult; as regards the Maṇibhadra figure he remarks that 'this must have been housed in some kind of structure.'[1]

The Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇīs that are represented and labelled with identificatory inscriptions by the artists of Bharhut. are Supavāsa, Virūḍhaka, Gaṅgita, Sūcīloma, Kupira (Kubera), Ajakālaka, Sudasanā and Cadā; the Devatās that can be recognised there with the help of the inscriptions are Sirimā, Culakokā (Kṣudrakokā) and Mahākokā; we can also definitely identify with the artists' aid he Nāga king Elāpatra (Erakapatra) in his two forms, first as a serpent and secondly as a human being with serpent hoods attached to the back of his head. B. M. Barua has collected mythological stories from the Pāli Buddhist literature referring to the many occasions when one or other of the above had come in contact with the Buddha and received his blessings.[2] In the other early Buddhist monuments like Sanchi and Bodh Gaya, we find many of these figures, though they cannot be clearly distinguished in the absence of descriptive labels by their side. The Hellenistic artists of Gandhāra, in the approved Buddhist tradition, do not fail to portray elaborately the same class of figures in the numerous reliefs that decorated the various sections of the *stūpas* and *vihāras*. The frequency with which they appear in these monuments, though here in a secondary position, does not fail to impress one about the hold which they had on the religious lives of the people. Several Nāga figures, snake coils and hood attached to the back of their human bodies, are in the collection of the Mathura Museum. The inscribed

[1] Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[2] B. M. Barua, *Bharhut*, Vol. II, pp. 57-74.

life-size statue from Chhargaon (*C.* 13 in the Museum) of the time of Huvishka (40th year), standing in a spirited attitude with his right hand raised above the head, shows that this object of worship was installed 'at their own tank by two friends Senahasti and Bhonuka for the propitiation of the worshipful Nāga (*Priyyatti Bhagavā o*) The Sculpture No. C. 28 in the same Museum, representing a corpulent male and a female figure seated to front side by side, has an inscription in Brāhmī characters of the Kushan period, which reads *Priyati Siddha* (ḥ) (May the Siddha be pleased).[1] Relief No. C. 8 and Sculpture No. C. 12 there, regarded as similar to the above by Vögel and iconographically akin to Kubera and his consort (in No. C. 12 the female is shown with a child on her left knee), may properly be described as Siddhas, a class of worshipful beings, the denizens of the *antarīkṣa* region, belonging to the category of the Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Kinnaras, etc., also represented in early and later art. All the various images just mentioned are mostly those of the gods that are described in the early Jaina literature as *vyantara devatās*, *i.e.*, 'intermediate gods' (are they also intermediaries in a sense between the mortals and the new formed higher sectarian gods, the objects of their worship?).[2] The images of the early Vedic divinities are few and far between—in early Buddhist art Śakra and Brahmā are no doubt introduced as accessories, but their independent figures as objects of worship (*bhagavat*) are not likely to be found; iconic representations of the new-formed sectarian gods like Vāsudeva and Śiva are also rare in the early period.

The above-mentioned data collected from a somewhat summary study of the extant early Indian monuments lend support to the view that the higher section of the Indo-

[1] J. P. H. Vögel. *Mathura Museum Catalogue*. pp. 88-89, for the Chhargaon Nāga, and p. 92 for the Siddha image.

[2] For some details regarding the Vidyādhara motif in early Indian art, refer to my article on 'Vidyādhara' in *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 52ff. Lüders has published a long article on 'Vidyādharas in Indian Art and Mythology' in *Z.D.M.G.*, 1938. The article is full of interesting information.

Aryans,—at the time we are speaking of they have become to all intents and purposes Indians,—adopted the practice of making images and worshipping them after their culture contact with the lower orders of the people and the earlier settlers of India. The evidence of the early Buddhist monuments like Bharhut and Sanchi fully proves that when the higher cult god Buddha was not being represented in an iconic form, these folk gods and goddesses were being iconically represented. It will be shown in the next chapter with the aid of numismatic data that the deities belonging to the orthodox Brahmanical cults, like Śiva and Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, seem to have already come to be iconically represented in the 1st and 2nd centuries B. C., if not earlier. The iconic representations of these cult objects, however, were probably the direct outcome of the gradual incorporation of most or all of the lower divinities in the ever-expanding Brahmanic pantheon and their association with and absorption into different cults. The Kālīya-damana episode in the mythology of the Vāsudeva cult should be profitably compared in this connection. The other stories connected with this cult, such as the killing of the ass demon Dhenuka, the bull demon Ariṣṭa, the horse demon Keśin, and the destruction of the twin Arjuna trees occurring in the post-Christian Bhāgavata literature and illustrated in art as early as the 4th century A.D. (if not earlier), perhaps portray the mythologists' attempts to refer to the subjugation of some of the lower cults by the higher one which was soon to be accepted as authoritative by the orthodox Vedic section of the people. Coomaraswamy has collected plastic evidence to show how the iconography of the lower gods influenced the iconic types of the higher cult deities; his remark in this connection is worth quoting: 'In early Indian art, so far as cult images are concerned, one iconographic type stands out predominant, that is the standing figure with the right hand raised, the left on the hip. . . Of this type are the early images of Yakṣas and Yakṣīs, whether independent or attendant. And it is also this type which provided the model for the cult

images of other deities, such as Śiva or Buddha, when the necessities of Bhakti determined the appearance of all deities in visible forms.'[1] We have already seen the etiology of the Yogī motif in some of the cult-images; here, we get a clue to the origin of the other mode. Vögel has also rightly observed that 'modern idols of Baladeva manufactured here are exact copies of the ancient Nāga figures.'[2] It may be added that in ancient and mediæval times also, images of Baladeva (Saṃkarṣaṇa, the elder brother of Vāsudeva) were directly copied from the hybrid Nāga figures and this iconographic association has led to the creation of the confused myth that he was an incarnation of the world-snake Ananta Nāga or Seṣa Nāga.

It will not be out of place here to put in a few words about a practice which is intimately associated with that of worshipping images in shrines. This is the custom of the erection of the *dhvajas* or votive columns in honour of various sectarian deities like Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Kubera, Skanda Mahāsena and others, before their temples. These *dhvajas* remind us not only of the memorial columns, one of whose early prototypes was the wooden *sthūna* of the Vedic burial mounds, but also of the *Yūpastambhas* which were erected by kings and noble men of yore in commemoration of their performance of the various Vedic sacrifices.[3] The *Garuḍadhvaja* that was

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Part I, p. 29.

[2] J. Ph. Vögel, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[3] For Vedic *sthūna cf. R.V.*, X. 18, 13. For the *Yūpastambhas*, refer to *Mahābhārata*, III, 198, V. 10; I, 94, V. 28-29; *Raghuvaṃśa*, VI, 38; Isapur stone yūpa with a Brāhmī inscription of the time of Vāshiska, the successor of Kanishka, in the year 24 of the Kushan era, J. Ph. Vögel, *op. cit.*, p. 189; three stone Yūpas discovered at Badva in the old Kotah State (Rajputana) of the Kṛta year 295, *E.I.*, XXIII, pp. 42 ff. and pls; the Bijayagaḍh sacrificial post (*yūpa*) with an inscription of the Kṛta year 428, Fleet, *C.I.I.*, III, p. 253. Reference may also be made to the Aśokan columns; they are really *Śāsanastambhas* (*cf.* the word *Śāsanastambha* used in the Motupalli pillar inscription of Gaṇapatideva, *E.I.*, XII, pp. 195-97), but are described as *Śilāthambhas* in the edicts; it is interesting to note that Aśoka indirectly refers to the existing custom of erecting free standing stone pillars in India, *cf.* Rupnath Rock edict, lines 4-5. The erection of *Indra-dhvajas*, usually wooden ones, specially associated with royalty, is frequently referred to in the epic and purāṇic literature; the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* devotes a big chapter to *Indradhvaja* (Dvivedi's Edition, Ch. 42).

discovered at Besnagar has already been referred to. But it will be of interest to note here that two other capitals of columns found here, whose shafts have unfortunately not been discovered, are shaped as a *tāla* (fan palm), and as a *makara* (crocodile), and there can be no doubt that these, when they were whole, served as the votive columns dedicated to the two *vyūhas*, *viz.*, Saṃkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna (the former is *Tāladhvaja* and the latter *Makara-ketana*) of the Bhāgavata or the Pāñcarātra cult.[1] D. R. Bhandarkar's suggestion that the *makara*, itself the pinnacle of the capital, was originally surmounted by a crowning piece, another Garuḍa capital discovered at Besnagar, is *a priori* unlikely. The two small holes behind the eyes of the makara, which led Bhandarkar to make that suggestion, were probably meant for the insertion of painted banners or flags. The discovery of the separate *tāla*, *garuḍa* and *makara* capitals proves the probability of either the first three of the four *vyūhas*, *viz.*, Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna having been enshrined in the locality, or, it may indicate the existence of shrines dedicated to the three of the five worshipful Vṛṣṇi-vīras. It is likely that the Besnagar site contained also shrines of Sāmba and Aniruddha. Sāmba's characteristic *dhvaja* is not mentioned in the Pāñcarātra texts, but Aniruddha's *dhvaja* is described in them as *ṛṣyadhvaja* (*ṛṣya* is a white antelope). The capital of a stone column shaped like a cluster of palmyra leaves to be dated approximately in the 1st century B.C., discovered by Garde at Pawāyā in Gwalior State, curiously enough substantiates the old practice of erecting *tāladhvajas* in honour of Saṃkarṣaṇa.[2] Reference ought to be made in this connection to the capital of a stone column, in the form of 'a banyan tree represented as a *Kalpa-vṛkṣa*, yielding abundance, enclosed by a plaited rail and rising from a square railed base', which was discovered by Cunningham at Besnagar. Bags and vases overflowing with coins are shown beneath the branches of the tree ; a

[1] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, pp. 188-91, pl. LIII and LIV.
[2] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1914-15, Part I, p. 21, pl. XVI c.

conch-shell and a lotus flower 'similarly exuding coins found on the other side of the tree,' have correctly been identified by Coomaraswamy with the two of the '*nidhis*' of Kubera, *viz.*, *Śaṅkha* and *Padma*. This banyan capital which is usually dated in the 3rd century B. C. might have been originally placed on the top of a column standing in front of a shrine of Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa, whose special cognisance was a bag or a vase full of coins.[1] Another explanation of this sculpture may be offered here. It might have been placed in front of a shrine of the goddess Śrī (Lakṣmī) who was the presiding deity of the 'science' described in the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* as *Padminī-Vidyā*. The Besnagar Yakṣiṇī found within 60 yards of the banyan capital may really stand for the goddess Śrī (for details refer to my article in J.I.S.O.A., Vol. IX, pp. 141-46).

Not very long ago were discovered some interesting stone objects at Lāla Bhagat, a small village in the Dehrapur Tehsil of the Kanpur district, U.P.; these consisted of a red sandstone cock carved in the round and a broken red sandstone

[1] Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Pt. II, p. 72, pl. 1. The original is in the Indian Museum, Calcutta; I have counted the number of objects coming in a downpour as it were from the so-called *Kalpadruma* and have found in all there are 8 such :—a conch-shell, a lotus, two vases all exuding coins and four more or less similar bags or purses, their necks tied round by strings, the idea being that they also contain treasures. Coomaraswamy enumerates 9 treasures of Kubera, *viz.*, *Padma*, *Mahāpadma*, *Śaṅkha*, *Makara*, *Kacchapa*, *Mukunda*, *Nanda*, *Nīla* and *Kharva* which are really water-symbols according to him. But the list is not the same in all the texts; the above list does partially agree with the one quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma* from *Hārāvalī*, the names of the last three being put in as *Kunda*, *Nīla* and *Varcca*. *Kunda* seems to be a mistake for *Nanda* and *Varcca* or *Kharva* are evidently later additions; for the same lexicon quotes from Bhārata—'*Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇe tu varcca iti hitvā aṣṭāveva uktāḥ* :— *Padminī nāma yā vidyā Lakṣmītasyādhidevatā* | *Tadādhārāśca nidhayastān me nigadataḥ śṛṇu* ā *Tatra Padmamahāpadmau tathā makarakacchapau* | *Mukundanīlaunandaśca śaṅkhaścaivāṣṭamo nidhiḥ*‖ *Satyāmṛddhyāṃ bhavantyete sadbhiḥ saha bhavantyamī* | *Ete hyaṣṭau samākhyātā nidhayastava kroṣṭuke* ‖

There is thus no uniformity about the number and we can suggest that the eight objects descending from the banyan capital symbolise the *aṣṭanidhis* associated primarily with Śrī Lakshmī and secondarily with Kubera. Mediæval representations of Jambhala, the Buddhist counterpart of Kubera show the god seated on a couch beneath which is a row of *eight* coin jars, on the upturned one of which exuding coins, the god's right leg rests; one of his hands holds a mongoose vomitting jewels; the purse is the usual cognisance of the Brahmanical Kubera. The number of coin jars beneath the seat of Jambhala should be noted in this connection.

pillar, square below and octagonal above.[1] The latter bears among other figures the figure of Gaja-Lakṣmī flanked by a pilaster emerging from a pot resting on the head of a Yakṣa and crowned by a cock; the stone cock must have originally served as the capital of a column, perhaps the very column whose carved shaft was found some distance from it, as it still bears a tenon projecting from its bottom. The cock as well as the peacock is the special emblem of Kārttikeya and is especially associated with various aspects of the deity; thus on the coins of the Kushan emperor Huvishka, Mahāsena and Skanda, two of the different aspects of the same god, are shown holding in their hands standards surmounted by a bird which is presumably a cock or a peacock.[2] Skanda Kārttikeya is described in the texts as *Barhiketu* (*Skandaḥ Kumārarūpaḥ śaktidharo barhiketuśca, Bṛhatsaṃhitā* ch. 57), and so there can be no doubt that these Lala Bhagat finds are connected with the cult of Kārttikeya whose shrine existed somewhere near their provenance in the 2nd century A.D. On one class of the Yaudheya coins, Skanda appears accompanied by a peacock, and on the peacock type coins of Kumāragupta I, he rides on the bird (cf. Pl. IX, fig. 8). Some mediæval sculptures of this god are known, where a cock is placed in his hand. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* enjoins that *kukkuṭa* and *ghaṇṭā* should be placed in his right hand, and *vaijayanti patākā* and *śakti* in his left. The *Mahābhārata* associates cock with him (*Tvaṃ krīḍase ṣaṇmukha kukkuṭena yatheṣṭa nānāvidha kāmarūpī*, III. 231, 16). One other interesting fact worth noticing about the pillar fragment is that the prominence given to the figure of Sūrya among the carvings on its side supports the suggestion of some writers that Kārttikeya had some solar connection; Skanda is sometimes regarded as one of the attendant divinities of the Sun god in some iconographic

[1] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1929-30, pp. 132-33, pl. XXXI. The objects are to be dated in the 2nd century A.D. and not B.C. as wrongly put down by M.S. Vats; the editor of the Report corrects the mistake. The inscription on the face of the pillar reads :—*Kumāra vara.....*, in characters of the 2nd century A.D.

[2] Gardner, *B. M. C. C. G. S. K. I.*, pp. 138, 149, pl. XXVII, 16, and XXVIII, 22; *cf.* also Pl. IX, figs. 6 and 9.

texts where he is both named as Daṇḍa and Skanda (*cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 303-04, where he quotes from *Viśvakarmā-śilpa* and *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*).[1]

The numismatic and glyptic data are so very interesting and important especially for determining the early types of Brahmanical deities and they have been so little systematically treated that I have reserved two separate chapters for discussing them.

[1] These points were raised and discussed by me in fuller details in an article on 'Indian Votive and Memorial Columns', published in *J.I.S.O.A.*, Coomaraswamy Volume (Vol. V), pp. 13-20.

CHAPTER IV

Brahmanical Divinities and their Emblems on Early Indian Coins

The way in which the ancient Indian coins and seals can be utilised for the study of Indian iconography has already been indicated in the first chapter. The value of the earliest Indian coins in this respect has also been briefly assayed.[1] The one substantial fact which is supplied to us by them, if we accept the view sponsored by several scholars that many of the symbols are religious in character, is that they fully corroborate the conclusion already arrived at with the help of textual and monumental evidence with regard to the earlier aniconic tradition of a large section of the Indians. Even when iconism had come to be accepted by the majority of the Indian people, they continued the earlier practice. Some of the animals appearing on them

[1] For a somewhat detailed discussion about the significance of some of the symbols appearing on them, refer to Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, pp. 43-45. D. B. Spooner at first suggested that many of the symbols were particularly Buddhist in character, the so-called solar symbol stood for Dharmacakra, the tree, for Bodhi tree, etc., *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1905-06, pp. 151 ff. But later he discarded this view in favour of another, *viz.*, that many of them were Zoroastrian in nature; thus the solar symbol stood for Mithra, the tree for *haoma* tree, etc., *J.R.A.S*; 1915, pp. 411-13. D. R. Bhandarkar supposed that many of these can be explained as the various ways of representing the seven jewels (*sapta ratnāni*, such as *hasti*, *aśva*, *ratha*, *maṇi*, *strī*, *gṛhapati* and *parināyaka*, the insignia of an Indian Cakravartin empowered to strike coins, *A.S.I.A.B.*, 1913-14, p. 211. Durga Prasad tried to explain the significance of these symbols with the help of some late texts and suggested that most of these were Tāntric in character; he described the circular cluster of dots as *vindumaṇḍala*, a variant of the so-called Taxila symbol as *ṣaḍara cakra*, etc., *J.A.S.B.*, 1934, Numismatic Supplement No. XLV, pp. 16-55. J. Allan in his publication—*Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India in the British Museum*—has justifiably refrained from putting forth any suggestion about their character and has gone to the length of drawing most of these for referring to them in his description. P. N. Bhattacharyya in his *Memoir* (of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 62), on a hoard of silver punch-marked coins from Purnea, has very carefully noted the multifarious symbols and their variants appearing on them; he has also not attempted to explain any of them.

may stand for theriomorphic representations of deities while others appearing on mountain symbols, three-, five- or six-arched ones, may also have some cult significance; the wheel, lotus and rayed disc may well be accepted as depicting the Sun god; the tree within railing may stand for *vṛkṣa caityas* or *sthalavṛkṣas*; we find even a human figure holding a staff and a vase in his two hands, depicted almost in the same manner as on the coins of Ujjayinī where we can justifiably identify it as Śiva; the three-arched mountain symbol with a crescent above it may typify the aniconic representation of the same god (he is sometimes described as *triśṛṅga parvata*, *cf.* Coomaraswamy, *O. Z.*, 1927-28, p. 179) with the lunar crescent on his crest, *Śaśāṅkaśekhara* (Pl. I, figs. 1-4); some other symbols again as the second from the top on the left column of page 300 of Allan's *Catalogue* may be taken to depict schematically a *garuḍa*- or a *makara-dhvaja*. But all these suggestions are, by their very nature, conjectural in character, and no certainty can be arrived at in the present state of our knowledge. It seems, however, there is a great resemblance between some of them and others appearing on the pictographic seals of the Indus Valley, and if we can ever recognise the exact significance of the latter, then more light may be thrown on the former. But this uncertainty and hesitation disappear to a very great extent when we take up the study of the local and tribal coins. Some at least of the figures appearing on them can be explained with much greater confidence, and when this is done it will appear that these are associated with particular religious practices or cults. Thus, the bull standing before a symbol (Pl. II, fig. 2) differently represented (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 307, Col. II, Nos. 3-6) on the earliest coins of the Ārjunāyanas and the Yaudheyas (collectively to be dated in the 2nd-3rd century B.C. or a little later) may very well represent the bull before the *yūpa*, *i.e.*, sacrificial post. Allan has offered two suggestions for the symbol—a *liṅga* or a *yūpa*, the latter of which is acceptable. He has noticed this symbol on the reverse of one round copper coin of Viṣṇumitra, collected by Prinsep from Kanauj; he correctly remarks, 'The reverse has a horse

apparently before a sacrificial post (*yūpa*) and may commemorate an *aśvamedha* sacrifice.'[1] One can compare the representation of this Vedic *yūpa* with figures appearing on some other early coins in the tribal series, which were certainly based on plastic types and which were also cult objects. Stone *yūpas* belonging to the third century A.D. have been discovered at Badva, old Kotah State, Rajputana; their shape supports my suggestion to a great extent (for some symbols appearing on punch-marked, local, tribal and other coins of ancient India, refer to Plates I and II).

One of the earliest devices, frequently found on tribal coins, is Gaja-Lakṣmī, *i.e.*, Lakṣmī standing (rarely seated), being bathed by two elephants (Foucher recognises in it the nativity scene of the Buddha). It appears on an uninscribed coin from Kausāmbī (3rd century B.C.), coins of Viśākhadeva, Śivadatta and probably also of Vāyudeva of Ayodhyā (1st century B.C.) and uninscribed coins of Ujjayinī (2nd-3rd century B.C.); nay, such was the popularity of this device that many alien rulers of northern India like Azilises, Rajuvula and Śoḍāsa adopted it on their coins (Pl. XI, fig. I).[2] Relief carvings illustrating this motif

[1] J. Allan, *Op. cit.*, pp. xciv, 147, Pl. XIX, 13. An elaborate form of the same symbol appears on the Aśvamedha type coins of the Gupta emperors, Samudragupta and Kumāragupta I. I have referred to this symbol, though it does not represent an icon, for showing how Vedic ceremonial religious practice is being portrayed by a few at least of these tribal coins. In my paper on 'Devices on Some Tribal Coins', published in *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XVI, 497 ff., I have adduced grounds for explaining the 'Bull before *yūpa*' symbol as associated with the *Śūlagava* sacrifice mentioned in the Gṛhyasūtras. The performance of this sacrifice resulted in the acquisition of wealth and prosperity.

[2] J. Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-4, 149, 187, 190-1, 256 and corresponding plates; R. B. Whitehead, *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I., p. 135, Pl. XIII, fig. 333. The reverse device of some copper coins of Maues and Azes (*P.M.C.*, Vol. I, pp. 100-101, 122; *B.M.C.*, pp. 70-71, 89) has been described as a 'female figure standing to front between trees'; Whitehead says that it may be a Bacchante among vines, while Gardner asks whether it may be a Maenad standing between two vines. Coomaraswamy in his article on Early Indian Iconography (*Eastern Art*, Vol. I, p. 178) refers to three varieties of Lakṣmī, the third one described by him being Padmavāsinī or Kamalālayā type, in which she is surrounded by flowering stems and growing leaves, and very often she holds one of the flowering stems in each hand. The above coin device of Maues and Azes (*cf.* Pl. VIII, fig. 4) may be a Hellenised version of the third variety of Lakṣmī. Coomaraswamy illustrates the motif as represented in the early Indian art of Central India, and the similarity is very striking.

are found on the early monuments of Central India; here is a close approximation of the numismatic and sculptural representations. The motif, as it typifies the Indian idea of prosperity, frequently appears on coins and sculptures of later date and is still used by the Hindus. Goddess Lakṣmī again, without the attendant elephants, either seated on a full-blossomed lotus or standing with a lotus flower in her hand, or standing on a lotus with the flower in her hand, very often appears on the coins of Ujjayinī, on those of the Hindu kings like Brahmamitra, Dṛḍhamitra, Sūryamitra, Viṣṇumitra, Puruṣadatta, Uttamadatta, her hand, very often appears on the coins of Ujjayinī, on the coins of the Satraps of Mathura like Śivadatta, Hagāmāsa, Rajuvula and Śoḍāsa, on the coins of the Rājanya Janapada and on the coins of Bhadraghoṣa of Pañcāla.[1] The so-called 'dancing girl wearing long hanging ear-rings and oriental trousers' on the coins of the Indo-Greek kings Pantaleon and Agathokles, dubbed as 'a strictly Hindu type' by Gardner, has been recognised by Coomaraswamy in his article on 'Early Indian Iconography' as Śrī-Lakṣmī, with a great deal of justification. I myself hesitatingly suggested that the female figure on the above coin with a very long equine head may stand for Yakṣinī Aśvamukhī (Pl. IX, fig. 7).[2] The city deity of Puṣkalāvatī on the unique Indo-Scythian gold coin described by Gardner (*B.M.C.*, p. 162) may be identified either as Lakṣmī with a lotus in her hand, as suggested by Coomaraswamy in the above article (Pl. IX, fig. 9), or as Durgā Ekānaṃśā. It may be argued that the numismatic and sculptural representations of Lakṣmī do not prove much with regard

[1] J. Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-12, 252, 270-71, 279-80, 283, etc., and corresponding plates. The figure of the goddess on the Mathura coins was sometimes wrongly identified as that of Kṛṣṇa, *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 526. For a detailed study of the early iconography of Śrī-Lakṣmī on the basis of textual, monumental and numismatic data, refer to A. K. Coomaraswamy's article on 'Early Indian Iconography', in *Eastern Art*, Vol. I, pp. 175ff. The coins which are noticed above can collectively be dated from the 2nd century B.C. to the 1st century A.D. Some of these figures, however, may also stand for Durgā-Gaurī, as will be shown later on.

[2] *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XIV, 1938, p. 302.

to the iconic representations of deities associated with different Brahmanical cults like those of Śiva and Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, because, Lakṣmī, as the Indian goddess of wealth and prosperity, was respected by the Indians in general. But here also early Indian coins do not fail us. The appearance of the cult-gods on them may not be as frequent as that of this particular goddess, but their figures are undoubtedly met with. The reason for their comparative infrequency is obvious ; Lakṣmī could very appositely be used by the issuers of coins (units of wealth), to whatever creed they might belong ; but such could not usually be the case with the sectarian gods or goddesses.

With regard to the representation of Buddha and Śiva on the coins, the following observation of Coomarswamy is worth noticing, 'In Buddhist art, we find at Bharhut and Sanchi the tree, wheel, etc., on or behind an altar, clearly designated in the inscriptions as Buddha (*Bhagavato*) and worshipped as such. . . Later on the figure of a human teacher takes its place upon the throne, the old symbols being retained as specific designations. . . In the same way with Hindu types; thus we find at first the humped bull alone, then a two-armed, and finally a four-armed figure accompanying the bull, once the representative of the deity, now his vehicle, while other symbols are held in the hands as attributes.'[1] As regards Buddha, no certain representation of him appears on coins before the time of Kaniṣhka. On account of the hammer-like object placed in his raised right hand, the seated figure on some coins of Kadaphes cannot be definitely recognised as Buddha ; the seated figures on copper coins of Maues and on others from Ujjayinī are of uncertain character (*cf.* Coomaraswamy, *The Origin of the Buddha Image*).[2] In the case of Śiva, it is true, there cannot be much doubt in identifying the bull appearing on many indigenous coins as well as on those of the alien rulers of India as representing him theriomorphically. Thus, the humped bull, represented on the reverse side of the unique gold coin of an uncertain

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, p. 45.

[2] The seated figure on the coins of Kadaphes may stand for Śiva; the head seems to bear on it a *krobylos* (*jaṭāmukuṭa*), but the object in the raised right hand is not distinct

Indo-Scythic king, bearing legends in Greek and Kharoṣṭhī script, *Tauras* and *Uṣabhe* (*Vṛṣabha*), may stand for Śiva (Pl. IX, fig. 8) ; this reminds us of the same device appearing on the coins of the White Hun ruler Mihirakula with the legend *jayatu vṛṣaḥ* in the script of the period.[1] But, it has been already shown that the bull before a particular symbol on some coins may also have represented the sacrificial bull.

Before I pass on to the anthropomorphic figures of Śiva on early indigenous and foreign coins, I shall refer to a symbol which appears on an uninscribed cast coin (provenance unknown). It seems to be a somewhat realistic representation of the *liṅgam*. If the interpretation of this symbol is correct, then we have here an emblem intimately connected with Śiva-worship. In fact, Allan has definitely described it as *liṅgam* on square pedestal ;' the tree in railing on left of the same coin may stand for the *sthala-vṛkṣa* in association with the particular Śaiva emblem. Allan thus describes its obverse : Building(?) on 1. ; tree in centre ; on r. female figure to 1.' There can be no doubt about the interrelation of many of these symbols appearing on such types of coins, and on the basis of Allan's description as supported by his plates, one is tempted to find in the obverse and reverse devices of this coin, the cult object, the sacred tree associated with it, the shrine(?) as well as the votary all together (Pl. I, figs. 14-15). Though Allan has not named another symbol appearing on the obverse of two square copper coins probably to be attributed to Taxila, its very appearance seems to connect with the other one just described, the pedestal here being somewhat summarily represented (Pl. I, fig. 9). But *liṅgams* with or without elaborate pedestals are known to have existed in ancient times (for example, the Gudimallam Liṅga, one of the earliest such, rises abruptly from the floor of the shrine) ; in fact, in the early specimens the latter mode was usually followed. Now, the reverse of these coins has a hill with trees growing from its two sides and an honorific parasol like

[1] P. Gardner, *British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India*, p. 162, pl. XXIX, 15; V. A. Smith. *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, Vol. I, p. 236, pl. XXV, 5.

emblem on the top. Here again, these symbols, taken together, seem unmistakably to point to their cult connection. A Śivaliṅga on a pedestal placed between two different trees in side railings is also represented on the obverse of var. *c* of Class I coins hailing from Ujjayinī.[1] As for the association of the tree with the phallic emblem of Śiva, reference may be made to the terracotta seal in the collection of Dhir Singh Nahar, having on it a Śivaliṅga with subdued realism, described as *Pādapeśvara* in Gupta characters. Even now many of the important Śivaliṅgas worshipped in India have their particular trees; the celebrated Ap-liṅga of Jambukeśvara near Srirangam and the tradition associated with it should be noted here. Numerous textual references can be cited to show Śiva's connection with hills and mountains; notice should be taken here, however, of the extremely realistic phallic emblems of Śiva shown above or beside a hill exactly in the manner in which the latter symbol is depicted on the Taxila coins, and inscribed in Brāhmī characters of the Gupta Period, on some terracotta seals from Bhita (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, p. 49, Nos. 15 and 16. Pl. XI, fig. 8). The three coins noted above can with some confidence be dated in the 2nd-3rd century B.C., if not earlier. Coomaraswamy remarked, with regard to the symbols on punch-marked coins, before the publication of Allan's *Catalogue*, that the 'marks which we might expect, but which are not found, include the *liṅgam*, etc.' (*H. I. I. A.*, p. 45). If the above suggestion is accepted and there is every reason to accept it, we find here perhaps the earliest representation of phalli on some local or tribal coins of the historical period (for the phallic emblems of Śiva on an Ujjayinī coin, see Pl. I, fig. 10).

A few other symbols appearing on the indigenous as well as the foreign coins of India must also be interpreted as so many Śaivic emblems. The reverse side of the coins of the Pañcāla king Rudragupta bears a device which has been described by Allan as 'railing with three pillars above;

[1] J. Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 85, No. 2, XI, 2; p. 233, Nos. 154 and 154a, Pl. XXXV, 5 and p. 243, No. 19, Pl. XXXVI, 15.

uncertain objects at top of each.'' Two of these coins are illustrated on Plate XXVII (Nos. 1 and 2) of his book; the reverse of No. 2, I think, discloses the identity of this device. The central object is a trident (*triśūla*) placed inside a railing and the side ones are pillars similar to the two shown on either side of Agni standing over a basement on the coins of Pañcāla Agnimitra. The association of the issuer's name Rudragupta with the well-known attribute of Rudra-Śiva will have to be noted here. In fact, Allan in his Introduction (p. cxviii-cxix) puts forth the same suggestion; he writes, ' Rudragupta has on his reverse a trident between two pillars (*e.g.*, Pl. XXVII, 2), the emblem of Rudra-Śiva. On other coins (*e.g.*, Pl. XXVII, 1) the object appears to be a star or a kind of double trident with prongs below as well as above.' If we compare the central object with the device on the reverse of a coin doubtfully attributed to Taxila we find that both of them are identical. The latter has been described by Allan as 'Tree in centre; standing figure on either side' (*op. cit.*, p. 237, No. 2, Pl. XLV, 1); but there are only three prongs and these are placed on the top of the long staff issuing out of a basement. The two figures on either side of this enshrined *triśūla* emblem may simply represent the votaries before the object of their devotion. The central object on the obverse of the next coin reproduced in Allan's Plate XLV may show a tree as several branches issue out of the central stem; whatever may be its significance, it is also an object of worship. But this time it is so possibly to other gods, one of them being in his animal form; *cf.* Allan's description of the whole device 'Tree in railing in centre; on left, figure on elephant to right; on right, lion right with a solar symbol above; at top the hill with crescent, the taurine, *swastika* and an uncertain object' (p. 237). It can be suggested that some sacred tree associated probably with Śiva is being shown here as an object of veneration. Cunningham describes the reverse of a coin of the Pañcāla Dhruvamitra as 'Trident on basement of Buddhist railing ' and remarks, ' Dhruva is the north Polar Star, but as it is also a name of Śiva, I conclude that the trident refers to him' (*C., C.A.I.*, p. 81, Pl. VII,

fig. 3). Allan, however, writes about the same device, 'The object in question, which stands on a platform in the position usually occupied by the deity between two pillars with cross-bars at top, is, however, not a trident. On No. 53 (Pl. XXVII, 5) it looks like a battle-axe, but on No. 55 (Pl. XXVII, 6) and others the shaft is clearly bent. It must be a symbol of Dhruva, the pole-star ' (p. cxviii).. I am not sure about the nature of the device from the respective plates, but even if it be a battle-axe at all, then that would also connect the symbol with Śiva one of whose epithets is *dhruva* ; it being a special emblem of the polar star, however, should not also be discounted, especially with regard to the coin No. 55. In any case, I shall presently show how the combined trident-battle-axe was sometimes used by itself as the obverse or reverse device on coins. Mention may be made in this connection of a symbol appearing on some of the uninscribed cast coins described by Allan in pages 87-91 of his book (Pl. I, fig. 5). When observed along with the above devices, it seems to represent a trident with broad flattened prongs, issuing out of a railing which contains also two parasol-like objects on its two sides (a comparison with the side parasols of railings enclosing Bodhi-tree and other Buddhist symbols, as represented in Bodh Gaya and Amaravati reliefs, is suggested). The combined trident and battle-axe placed before a tree inside an enclosure on the reverse side of the coins of the Audumbara chief Dharaghoṣa should be noted here (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 124, Pl. XIV, 14). This combined symbol with undoubted Śaiva association appears on the obverse of Wema Kadphises' coins, where the king, a Māheśvara by faith, puts offerings in honour of his deity on the sacrificial fire (Whitehead, *P.M.C.*, Vol. I, Pl. XVII, 36). The same symbol is present on the coins of Vāsudeva and Vāsu ; when Samudragupta issued some of his gold coins in evident imitation of the late Kushan money, he had to replace the trident-battle-axe standard of the prototypes of his coins with the Garuḍa emblem sacred to Viṣṇu, as he was a *Parama-bhāgavata* (a devout *Bhāgavata* or a Vaiṣṇava). The replacement of the hill symbol with crescent above, possibly a Śaiva emblem,

with Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu's Garuḍa, by Chandragupta II in his silver issues, struck in imitation of the silver coins of the Western Satraps after he had overthrown them, may also be explained in the same manner.

Śiva appears for the first time in an anthropomorphic form on the coins hailing from Ujjayinī and its environs. The single standing figure on many of these coins can be definitely identified with him. Cunningham was not sure about its identification ; but the attributes in the hands, *viz.*, a staff (not a sun standard, as he described it, for the solar symbol does not seem to be joined to the staff) in the right and vase in the left clearly disclose its identity (Pl. I, fig.7). Any doubt whatsoever is set at rest by the testimony of another variety of the same series of coins which shows a bull slightly prancing up and looking at the deity (*cf.* the *Matsyapurāṇa* passage which enjoins that Viśākha, the mount of Śiva, should be in the attitude of looking at the god, *devavīkṣaṇatatparaḥ ;* Pl. I, fig. 13). Moreover, the three-headed standing figure on the obverse of a third variety of the Ujjayinī coins, carrying the identical attributes, further strengthens my hypothesis (Pl. I, fig. 8). Cunningham, no doubt, identified the latter as Mahākāla, but his statement that 'this coin may be accepted as a single evidence of Brahmanism at Ujjain' is unjustifiable. Allan is in doubt about the identity of this figure ; he proposes that this figure and its variants may stand for both the deities, *viz.*, Śiva Mahākāla and Skanda Kārttikeya (in the body of the *Catalogue*, however, he invariably describes them as Kārttikeya or simply as deity). The three heads of the figure on some Ujjayinī coins have been taken by him to represent partially the six heads of the latter divinity. But we have six-headed figures of Kārttikeya in indigenous coins and three-headed Śiva figures are known from Kushan coins.[1] On the obverse of the Audumbara chief Dharaghoṣa's silver coins, we find the figure of Viśpamitra (Viśvāmitra)

[1] Cunningham, *C. A. I.*, pp. 97-8, pl. x, figs. 1-6; Allan, *op. cit.*, Introduction, pp. cxliii, 245-52. The object in the right hand of the figure is invariably described by Allan as a spear, but it is nothing but a staff or a standard; the spear in the right hand of the definitely recognisable Kārttikeya on several varieties of the Yaudheya coins can rightly be distinguished from the staff above.

as described by the Kharoṣṭhī legend across the figure, but on the reverse there occur two symbols which are intimately associated with Śiva, *viz.*, combined trident-battle-axe on a pedestal and a tree within railing. What is further of interest in the case of the copper coins of the Audumbara chiefs, Śivadāsa, Rudradāsa and Dharaghoṣa, is that they almost invariably bear on their reverse sides the representations of structural shrines ('domed pavilions,' Coomaraswamy, and ' two-storied domed *stūpa* ', Allan) with the trident-battle-axe standards almost invariably placed before them (Pl. I, figs. 16-17). The latter unmistakably prove that the structures are not *stūpas*, but Śaiva shrines which must have contained images or phallic emblems of Śiva. The coins can be dated in the 1st-2nd century B.C. On some copper coins of the second century A.D. issued by an anonymous ruler of most probably the Kuniṇḍa tribe, we find the standing figure of Śiva, holding in his right hand a trident-battle-axe, his left hand, from which hangs some thing (tiger skin?), resting on hip ; his head is adorned with *jaṭās* arranged in the *jaṭābhāra* manner, as we find them arranged on that of Śiva carved on the shaft of the Śiva-liṅga at Guḍimallam ; on some specimens, however, he seems to be standing under an umbrella (Pl. I, fig. 21.). The legend on these coins reads '*Bhagavata Chatreśvara mahātmanaḥ*,' *i.e.*, ' of the holy or worshipful one, the noble-souled lord of the *Chatra* ' (one of the Indian insignia of sovereignty).[1]

Among the coins of the early foreign rulers of India, Śiva has been recognised on certain billon coins of Gondophares. He stands facing with his left leg slightly advanced and head bent a little towards the left, clasping a long trident in his right hand and a palm-branch in his left which rests

[1] For the Audumbara and Kuniṇḍa coins, refer to Allan *op. cit.*, pp. 122-25 and plates, pp. 167-68 and plates. Does this class of Kuniṇḍa coins show that the tribal state of the Kuniṇḍas at one time was dedicated to the Lord Śiva in the 2nd century A.D., and the coins were issued in his name in the capacity of its sovereign ruler (the title Chatreśvara is significant)? We can cite a modern analogy; the real ruler of the old Travancore State was Lord Padmanābha and the ruling chief acted as his substitute. In mediæval times, the kingdom of Mewar was also sometimes dedicated to the Lord Ekliṅgaji, its patron deity.

in the approved Indian iconographic manner on the hip (*kaṭihasta*). Faint traces of *jaṭā* are to be found on his head. E. J. Rapson described another variety of the deity with his right hand extended and a trident in his left hand (*J.R.A.S.*, 1903, pp. 285-6). Figure 9 in Pl. XXII of Gardner's *Catalogue* shows this second variety of Śiva on Gondophares' coins. The standing posture of the god in this type is exactly similar to that of Śiva (undoubtedly so) on some gold coins of Wema Kadphises, where the deity is depicted without his mount, though there is a little difference in the placing of attributes in the hands (Pl. I, fig. 19). Thus, the object held in the right hand of the latter figure is not simply trident but trident-battle-axe combined (as in the Kuniṇḍa coin noted above), and the object hanging down from the left arm is the skin garment, the palm branch being absent. But the close similarity of the slightly bent pose of the body, just suggestive of *dvibhaṅga*, is a very important consideration, and the possibility of its being the Greek deity Poseidon, because that god too has a trident as his attribute and the palm-branch is a Greek insignia, can be discounted. In the other variety noticed by Rapson the palm-branch is absent. The epithet *devavrata* applied to Gondophares on most of his coins may be significant ; it is likely that *deva* here does not simply mean 'god' but means the god Śiva as in several passages of Hiuen-Tsang's *Si-yu-ki* (*cf.* his statement, 'Outside the west gate of the city of Puṣkalāvatī was a Deva-temple and a marvel-working image of the Deva ;' Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, I, p. 214). Considering all these facts one will be fully justified in rejecting Tarn's statement that Śiva 'does not appear in person on coins till those of the Kushans.'[1] On a round copper seal discovered at Sirkap in the year 1914-15, Śiva appears with trident in left hand and

[1] W. M. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 402. For the coins of Gondophares and Wema Kadphises, *cf.* Whitehead, *op. cit.*, p. 151, Pl. XV, Fig. 43 and p. 183, Pl. XVII, Fig. 33. For Śiva with his mount on Wema's coins, *cf.* Pl. IX, fig. 14. It is curious that even in the second edition of his book Tarn did neither refer to the anthropomorphic figures of Śiva on much earlier coins of Ujjayinī, nor to the human forms of the god present on the coins of Gondophares (Rapson) and of Manes as shown by myself.

club in right; it is biscriptural, bearing the legend '*Śivarakṣitasa*' in Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī characters of the first century A.D., or a little earlier. The standing pose of the figure is slightly dissimilar to that of the same god on the coins of Gondophares and Wema Kadphises just discussed; the left leg is placed in the same manner but the right one with the bent knee is stretched forward. But the club on the right hand is specially noteworthy, because it greatly resembles the knotted club in the hands of Herakles appearing on some Indo-Greek coins. The treatment of the whole figure is undoubtedly Hellenistic, though the subject itself and part of the motif are purely Indian (*cf.* the loin cloth and the turban on the head; Pl. XI, fig. 5).[1]

Śiva appears earlier on the obverse of some square copper coins of Maues. The device on a British Museum coin of Maues has been described by Gardner as 'male figure l., chlamys flying behind; holds club and trident' (*B.M.C.*, p. 71, Pl. XVII, 3); but Whitehead describes a Punjab Museum specimen of the same variety of Maues' coin as 'male deity striding to l. with flowing draperies, holding club in r. hand and long spear or sceptre in l.' (*P.M.C.*, Vol. I, p. 101, Pl. X, 25). A comparison of the plates in the two catalogues will show that both the specimens belong to the same variety of Maues' square copper coins, and Gardner's description, though short, is more correct. In fact, the peculiar knotted club in the right hand and the trident held over the left shoulder in the left and the characteristic stride leave no doubt that the god is identical with the one on the seal of Śivarakṣita, where the very name 'one protected by Śiva' shows that the god is Śiva. Thus, this is an undoubted representation of Śiva on a coin of Maues, and we can now say that Śiva makes his appearance on some coins of alien rulers of India much

[1] Sten Konow, *C. I. I.*, Vol. II, p. 102. Pl. XX, 11. The name of the owner of the seal, Śivarakṣita, is interesting; it means one protected by Śiva, i.e., Śiva was his patron deity. On this analogy, the name Terambi-pāla, referred to in the end of the first Chapter, may mean 'one protected by Terambi.' Terambi or Terambā may be the feminine form of Tryamba or Tryambaka, a name of Śiva.

earlier than on those of Gondophares (Pl. IX, fig. 18). Attention may be drawn in this connection to the obverse of Maues' coin (No. 13 in Cunningham's *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans*, p. 30, Pl. II, Fig. 13) which has been described by Cunningham as 'Male figure to front, with elephant goad over l. shoulder'; elephant goad as an attribute of Śiva appears on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka, and it is probable that this figure here also represents Śiva. Those figures on Maues' coins which carry only a trident in their hands and sometimes trample on a dwarfish figure are to be identified as Poseidon; he appears thus on certain coins of Antimachus Theos. But the composition reminds us of the Indian one in which Śiva tramples on Apasmāra-Puruṣa. The bronze seal No. 12, unearthed at Sirkap, Taxila, is described by Marshall in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1914-15, p. 35, Pl. XXIV, 50, as Herakles trampling down a bull-shaped dragon; the Kharoṣṭhī legend in it was tentatively read by him as *Tiḍusa Vibhumitrasa*(?). Konow definitely reads it as *Baḍusa Viśpamitrasa* and translates it as 'Of the young Brahman Viśvāmitra' (*C.I.I.*, Vol. II, p. 102). This figure most probably represents Śiva as Viśvāmitra, the name of the person in this seal being after the name of the god reproduced. The bull below the left leg of the principal figure is significant. The epithet *baḍu* and the name Viśpamitra (Viśvāmitra) of the owner of the seal are significant. The name is one of the various appellations of Śiva (*cf.* the name of the god on some silver coins of Dharaghosha, the Audumbara Chief noted above), and one of his aspects is described as Vaṭuka Bhairava (Pl. XI, fig. 4).

The most noteworthy representations of Śiva, however, especially from the iconographic point of view, are those that appear on the Kushan money, the coins of Wema Kadphises, Kanishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva. It is not merely the feature of the multiplication of Śiva's hands and heads that is interesting, but the varying nature of the attributes placed in the hands of Śiva is also of great iconographic interest. In the earliest of the Śiva figures in this series, *viz.*, those on the coins of Wema Kadphises, the god is

invariably two-armed, the right hand, almost without exception, holds a trident or a trident-battle-axe, while the left one hanging downwards carries a water-vessel, with the skin upper-garment slung round the forearm; the last feature strongly reminds us of a similar feature in the figure of Viśvāmitra on Dharaghoṣa's silver coins noticed above, and of the device of standing Herakles appearing on the coins of some Indo-Greek rulers like Demetrius (*cf.* also the figure of Herakles on some coins of Huvishka (Pl. I, fig. 18). The treatment of the *jaṭā* differs in individual specimens, two modes being discernible, one where the matted locks are gathered together ending in a knob just on the centre of the head, while in the other mode, beneath it is shown a convex-shaped object which may be the hair treated in a fashion similar to that on the head of Śiva in the Chatreśvara coin of the Kuninḍas. On one copper coin of Wema Kadphises, again, reproduced in Cunningham's *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans* (Plate XV, Fig. 11), the deity seems to be polycephalous; Cunningham has, however, described the figure simply as Śiva. In the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka the iconography of Śiva acquires a new orientation, and both the two-armed and the four-armed figures are found with a variety of attributes reminiscent of the varied iconography of later days. Śiva here almost invariably appears without his mount, and when he is two-armed, he carries a trident in the right hand and a gourd in the left (Whitehead suggests the possibility of the latter being a human head, but that is unlikely). On some copper coins of Kanishka in the Indian Museum, Śiva grasps a spear or a staff with right hand while his left hand rests on a club. On several types of gold and copper coins of Kanishka the god is four-armed and is shown wearing a garland or necklace, but different sets of attributes appear on different specimens; on one set of Kanishka's and Huvishka's coins Śiva holds in the upper right hand *vajra* (small hand-drum according to Cunningham and Whitehead; but the object closely resembles the thunderbolt which is held by Vajrapāṇi, the constant attendant of Buddha in Gandhāra

art), in lower right, a water-vessel with mouth downwards (an unusual way of holding it), in upper left hand a trident and in lower left an antelope (Pl. IX, fig. 15). On some specimens of this series we find elephant-goad along with the water-vessel in the lower right hand; this mode of crowding two attributes in one hand is uncommon in the representations of the Indian deities. Again, four-armed Śiva on some copper coins of Kanishka holds noose in lower right hand, while the lower left is sometimes empty, but at other times resting on hip or hanging down, it holds a water-vessel, the other attributes being similar to the above. Some gold coins of Huvishka show three-faced and four-armed Śiva, holding water-vessel, thunderbolt, trident and club respectively in the four hands from the lower right upwards (Pl. IX, fig. 16); on other gold coins of the same king Śiva appears as one-faced with more or less the same attributes, an antelope being placed in the lower left hand; but such is the imperfect state of preservation of many of his copper coins, that the attributes held by the hands of Śiva are seldom fully discernible.

Huvishka's gold coin described by Gardner in p. 148 of his book (Pl. XXVIII, 16) has a type of Śiva figure on the reverse, which is of outstanding interest from iconographic as well as cult point of view. His description is as follows, 'Śiva facing, three headed, nimbate; clad only in waist band, ithyphallic; has four arms and hands, in which are goat, wheel, trident, and thunderbolt' (Pl. IX, fig. 17). *Triśūla*, *vajra* and *cakra* are recognisable in the front left, back left and back right hands respectively; the goat or antelope in the front right is not so very distinct. There are undoubtedly three-heads encircled by a halo (this is sometimes absent round the heads of different deities); whether the faces are all human is not quite clear. The *cakra* in one of the hands and the *ūrdhraliṅga*, the latter so common in sculptural representations of Śiva from the late Kushan period onwards appearing here for the first time (no other early coin representations of Śiva in his human form bears it), are noteworthy characteristics. The device seems

to show the beginning of the interesting composite icon of Hari-Hara of subsequent days; it may also be of the same nature as that of the Gandhāra sculpture of Trimūrti.[1] But the suggestion that it stands for a composite icon, which is also the nature of the Gandhāra Trimūrti, is fully borne out by the evidence of a unique nicolo seal noticed by Cunningham long ago. Cunningham, however, could not understand its character, and his description of it was not accurate. He described the device in this manner:—'a Kushan chief (identified by him as Huvishka on account of the similarity of his headdress and garment with those of the Kushan King) standing in a respectful pose with folded hands before the four-armed god Viṣṇu; the god carries in his four hands a wheel (shown exactly like a cart-wheel), a mace, a ring-like object and a globular thing; there is an inscription in illegible characters by the side of the god.' Cunningham identified the four-armed figure as Viṣṇu on account of the emblems of *cakra* and *gadā*. The inscription which could not be read by him has, however, been deciphered by R. Ghirsman. According to the latter it is written in Tocharian script (an adaptation of Greek of a very cursive character), and it contains in the Tocharian language the names of Mihira (the Iranian form of the Sun god), Viṣṇu, and Śiva. He also differed from Cunningham regarding the identity of the foreign devotee who, in his opinion, stands for some unknown Hephtalite Huṇa chief. The dress and features of the worshipping figure led him to suggest it, and the seal device would thus be two or three centuries later than the time of Huvishka. But the seal device is of unique interest from the cult point of view, for it seems to emphasise a further development in the process of cult amalgam, which probably began in the time of Huvishka. It may be observed incidentally that it was these Kushan rulers (Kanishka and Huvishka specially) who showed a great deal of eclecticism in their religious views, and it is in the fitness of things that we find during their period the beginning of the process of cult amalgam. The iconography of the composite figure of the god is also very interesting, for in the emblems held by the god those of Viṣṇu and Śiva can be clearly recognised; the wheel is the emblem *par excellence* of the former, and the mace is curiously reminiscent of the club held by Śiva in the seal of Śivarakṣita already mentioned. In the two other indistinct objects held by this composite figure may be found the distinctive emblem of the Iranian Mihira (Indian Sūrya; Pl. XI, fig. 2). Such a composite cult icon would also remind us of similar figures of a much later date, one of the most representative of which is the Dula Deo (Khajuraho) temple icon of Brahmā-Viṣṇu-Śiva-Sūrya.[1]

[1] A.S.I.A.R., 1913-14, pp. 276 ff., pl. LXXIIa. Natesa Aiyar describes the Gandhāra relief as a three-headed and six-armed Trimūrti, the head to the proper right being that of Viṣṇu and the one to the proper left being that of Brahmā; the central head is that of Śiva recumbent on his bull. But from the plate, the animal mount appears to be an elephant; the composite character of the image is emphasised by such features as *cakra* (of Viṣṇu), *vajra* and the third eye (both of Śiva and Indra) and the elephant mount (of Indra).

One unique copper coin of Huvishka in the collection of the Indian Museum has the figure of 'an archer standing right, holding a bow as long as himself, with string inwards; legend right in peculiar characters, which look like old Brāhmī for *Gaṇeśa*'—Smith (Pl. X, fig. 8). Only one other specimen of such a coin was known when Smith published his *Catalogue*, and these two coins are of outstanding interest from both the numismatic and the iconographic point of view. These are the two exceptional pieces where Brāhmī script is used to describe the deity in the imperial Kushan series, and the device here has nothing to do with the elephant-headed and pot-bellied deity bearing that name. Here Śiva is most presumably indicated by the word which is also mentioned in the sixth canto of the *Rāmāyaṇa* as one of the attributive epithets of Śiva (*Gaṇeśo lokaśambhuśca lokapālo mahābhujaḥ | Mahābhāgo mahāśūlī mahādaṃṣṭrī maheśvaraḥ*). If the identification of this device is accepted, then we have here a unique representation of Śiva of early times where a bow is his principal attribute (*cf.* the Ṛgvedic description of

[1] For Cunningham's views about the nicolo seal device, refer to *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1893, pp. 126-7, Pl. X, Fig. 2; for Ghirsman's views, *cf. Les Chionites Hephtalites* by R. Ghirsman, pp. 55-8, Fig. 65 and Pl. VII, 1.

Rudra already noted in the second chapter—*Arhan vibharṣi sāyakāni dhanvārhan niṣkam*, etc.). Our survey of the iconographic types of Śiva represented on Huvishka's coins will be incomplete, if we fail to take note of the unique quarter stater of the same ruler, in the collection of the Punjab Museum, which has two figures, one male and the other female, standing facing each other, with a Kushan monogram between them, the former being described as Oeso (Bhaveśa) and the latter as Nana. Now there can be very little doubt that here Nana is identified by the die-cutter with Umā, the consort of Śiva, whose figure also is to be found on a unique coin of the same Kushan ruler, where the goddess was correctly described as OMMO (Umā) by the die-cutter; this coin was noticed by E. J. Rapson in *J.R.A.S.*, 1897, p. 324. Cunningham had two gold coins in his collection, one a stater and the other a quarter stater, which were later acquired by the British Museum. The latter is similar to the one in the Punjab Museum (*P. M. C.*, Vol. I, p. 197, Pl. XVIII, fig. 135) just described, but the former is the same in which Rapson recognised the figure of Umā. Cunningham wrongly described both the pieces in the same manner; Śiva is no doubt identical in both, but on the stater piece the goddess holds a different object in her right hand (in the other, Nana holds her peculiar sceptre tipped with a horse's head) and the inscription by her side can be clearly read as OMMO (Umā). Rapson remarked: ' not only is the inscription quite distinct, but the symbol which the female deity holds in her hand, it may perhaps be a flower, is quite different from the well-known symbol of Nanaia; and we may, therefore, unhesitatingly add Umā to the list of Indian deities represented on Kushan coins' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1897, p. 324). Rapson was fully correct in the above remark and we can produce fresh evidence in its support. The reverse of a stater piece of Huvishka reproduced in Pl. XVIII (No. 136) of the *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I (p. 197) is described by Whitehead as ' Figure of goddess with the cornucopia as on No. 130, with name to 1, which is quite blundered and illegible.' But

if the legend is compared with the other where Rapson reads OMMO (the coin is reproduced by Cunningham in *Numismatic Chronicle*, (Ser. III, Vol. XII, Pl. XIII) and *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans* (Pl. XXIII, fig. 1), it can be read in the same manner. It begins from top left corner and runs sideways; the first two letters are quite clear, but the third letter (the second M) shows two short additional strokes attached to it, and the last letter, an O, due to exigencies of space runs into the top corner of the second M. The whole legend reads OMMO (Pl. XI, fig. 7). The goddess Umā here holds a cornucopia like Demeter, Tyche and Ardochso; but in the coins of Huvishka, we find some such transpositions. Ambikā (Umā) holding cornucopia after the Ardochso figures on late Kushan coins can be seen also on the Chandragupta-Kumāradevī coins in the Imperial Gupta series.

We do not get so many varieties of Śiva figures on the gold and copper coins of the last great Kushan emperor Vāsudeva, where the god accompanied by his mount, is usually depicted as two-armed and having one face or three faces. A unique gold coin described by Cunningham bears Śiva with three heads and four arms, standing to front; water vessel, noose, trident and tiger-skin are placed in the four hands from the lower right onwards; his mount has got a bell attached to its neck (*C.I.K.*, Pt. III, p. 74, Pl. XXIV, fig. 9). When he is depicted two-armed, he almost invariably holds a noose (*pāśa*) in the right hand and a trident in the left. As regards the treatment of the head, one curious feature of these coins is worth noticing; sometimes the residue of the hair after being used to form a top-knot on the centre of the head, descending down the sides of the face, is treated in such a manner as to give a spurious appearance of the deity being three-headed. But on the other specimens, the additional faces, one on either side of the central face, can undoubtedly be recognised. On the basis of the noose in the hand of Śiva on some Kushan coins, Cunningham describes 'Śiva as Yama'; but the association of Śiva or Rudra-Śiva with noose is also comparatively old,

and in the later developed theological doctrines of the Śaiva system, *pāśa* (fetters) is very intimately connected with the god. He is the binder of the individual souls, as he is also the loosener of them. Thus, the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, where Rudra-Śiva is the god extolled, says—*Tat kāraṇaṃ sāṅkhyayogādhigamyaṃ jñātvā devaṃ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ* (VI. 13); the *Atharvaśiras Upaniṣad*, which is a sectarian Upaniṣad extolling the glories of Śiva, describes in detail a rite called the Pāśupata, known also as *Paśupāśavimokṣaṇa*. The god Śiva, as he appears one-headed and two-armed on the coins of Vāsudeva, served as the prototype of the devices of some of the later Kushan coins and those of the Kushano-Sassanian rulers and of many Hindu princes of India, like the kings of Kashmir.[1]

It is curious that though we get some inscriptions referring to the Bhāgavata shrines of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period, as previously noted, very few representations of the cult god Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu are found on the coins of the same period. On the other hand, though the numismatic portrayal of the other cult deity Śiva is so very elaborate, very few epigraphic reference to Śaiva shrines of the contemporaneous periods are forthcoming; still, there can be no doubt that there were such shrines as fully proved by some of the Audumbara coins noted above. One can refer here *in passim* to the Kharoṣṭhī inscription of the 1st century A.D. discovered at Panjtar below the Mahaban range, where a Śaiva shrine is most probably mentioned; the inscription bears the date 122. If Cunningham's eyecopy of it is accurate, there can be no question about the correctness of Konow's reading of a part of the 2nd line as *moike urumujaputre karavide śivathale*, which has been translated by him as ' was made an auspicious ground by Moika, the Urumuja scion.' In the introductory

[1] The description of many of the coin-types selected above are based on a close observation of specimens in the collections of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and the Punjab Museum, Lahore. The reader is referred to the relevant sections of the catalogues of the respective museums. Some descriptions are also based on Cunningham's plates appearing in his *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans* (Pl. XV, 11, Pl. XXIV, 6, 7, 8, 9).

section to his edition of this inscription, he remarks, " What a *śivathala* is, I cannot say. The word may mean ' a Śiva sanctuary ' or simply ' an auspicious ground,' and the latter meaning is probably the more likely one." But the alternative meaning, which he has himself suggested but discarded, seems to me to be more acceptable. The words *sthala* and *sthāna* are very frequently used in epic literature (*cf.* the word *Brahmasthāna* in the passage, *Tato gaccheta rājendra Brahmasthānamanuttamaṁ*, *Mahābhārata* III, 84, 103) and the inscriptions (*cf.* the word *mahāsthāna* in the Mathurā inscription discussed before) in the sense of ' a sanctuary,' ' a shrine.' The evidence of contemporary coins, as we have seen above, as well as the observations of foreign writers like Hesychius and Stobaeus fully prove that Śiva was the great object of worship among the people of north-western India. Śiva in his animal (bull) form was known to the Greeks as the god of Gandhāra; Hesychius writes, ' *Gandaros o Taurokrates par Indois.*' Now as regards Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, we could expect to find his figures on the coins which were discovered from Besnagar and Mathura, because both these localities, as we have shown, contained shrines of the god. But on the earliest monetary issues of Besnagar we do not find any such figure which can be described to represent him; the die-struck coins issued by the early Hindu kings and the Śaka satraps of Mathura bear a standing figure with right hand upraised and left hand on hip which was described as Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa by some numismatists due to the close association of this place with the Kṛṣṇa tradition. But now this view has rightly been rejected, and Śrī-Lakṣmī has been recognised in the particular device. On one interesting coin, however, in the so-called Pañcāla Mitra series, we find the figure of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu. The coin was issued by Viṣṇumitra, and in evident allusion to his name this particular god was figured; the close correlation between the name of the issuer and the deity represented on the reverse is one of the interesting characteristics of most of these coins to be dated in the 1st century B.C. The figure is described by

Cunningham simply as four-armed; but Allan thinks that he is really two-armed, 'his robes hanging down giving an effect which led Cunningham to describe it as above.' According to him the four arms would come down from the shoulders and not from the elbows. 'It is possible that he is represented as grasping on the left a pole surmounted by a discus and another on the right surmounted by a trident.' The size of some of these copper coins is so small and their preservation is so indifferent that it is impossible to be sure about the iconographic features of the deity figured on them. But the artistic convention of separating the arms from the elbow downwards is well-known in India and many early mediæval specimens are known where this is adopted by the image-maker. Al Idrisi's description of the Sūrya image enshrined in the sun-temple at Multan is to be noted in this connection; he says that 'its arms, below the elbow, seem to be four in number' (Elliot's *History of India*, Vol. I, p. 82). As regards the attributes, the only certain one is the *cakra* in the upper left hand of the god, but it is held by the rim and not placed on the top of a pole.[1]

This is the only Viṣṇu figure on one of the early Indian coins of the 1st century B.C. or thereabouts, known to me. D. C. Sircar, presumably on the basis of V. A. Smith's reading of the legend on a copper coin of Huvishka in the collection of the Indian Museum, has suggested that Viṣṇu appears on some coins of the Kushan ruler (*Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 439). The reverse device of this coin has been reproduced here in Plate X, fig. 10; the emblems in the hands of the four-armed deity are not distinct at all, but they seem to have more affinity with those of Śiva (a trident or a staff, a thunderbolt, an antelope, etc.) than with those of Viṣṇu. Smith reads the legend, it is true, as *oosno* in cursive Greek, and this reading would suggest that the god shown here should be Viṣṇu; but the reading of the

[1] Viṣṇumitra's coins, refer to Cunningham (*C.A.I.*, p. 84, Pl. VII, ... *op. cit.*, pp. cxix, 202, Pl. XXIX, 6-9).

legend is not without doubt, and the figure may stand for Śiva. Some coins of Huvishka bear blundering legends. Some emblems particularly associated with the Vāsudeva cult, can, however, be recognised in several of the devices on the indigenous coins of India of a very early period. We have already suggested the possibility of finding the *garuḍa* or *makara* emblems in the symbols of a few of the early punch-marked coins of India. Several double-die square copper coins of Taxila bear on their obverse a symbol which has been described by Allan as a pillar in a railing surmounted by a fish-like object (Pl. II, fig. 4). A few round copper coins of uncertain origin bearing fragmentary legends (reading extremely uncertain) have on the reverse a symbol described by Allan as 'a bushy tree in railing;' but a consideration of the figures 1-6 of Pl. XLVII of Allan's book enables us to offer a plausible suggestion that these are really columns surmounted by fan-palm capitals (Pl. II, fig. 3). A comparison with representations of ordinary palm trees which appear on some coins of Ayodhya lends support to this view. Reference has already been made to the fan-palm capitals discovered at Besnagar and Pawāyā, the former in the old Bhopal and the latter in the old Gwalior State. Thus, it is probable that these symbols are really based on the votive columns connected with Bhāgavatism, *viz.*, the *garuḍa*, *mīna* (*makara*) and *tāla* capitals associated with Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, Pradyumna and Saṃkarṣaṇa respectively. The elaborate wheel appearing on the reverse of the unique silver coin of the Vṛṣṇi Rājanya gaṇa has been described by Cunningham and Allan as a *dharmacakra*; but its appearance on a coin of Vṛṣṇirājanya, with which clan according to consistent Epic and Purāṇic tradition the name of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa is associated, makes it highly probable that the *cakra* stands for the *Sudarśanacakra* of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, one of the best revered symbols among the early Pāñcarātrins and the Vaiṣṇavas (Pl. II, fig. 7). The basic idea underlying the wheel in its association with Vāsudeva is solar, and the wheel as a symbol *par excellence* of the god is undoubtedly one of the tangible signs of his connection

with the Vedic Viṣṇu, an aspect of the Sun. If this suggestion is accepted, we are to seek for the interpretation of the composite pillar capital made up of the foreparts of a lion and an elephant appearing on the obverse of the same coin from the early Pāñcarātra mythological literature (Pl. II, fig. 10).[1] The wheel surrounded by a circle of dots appearing on the obverse of the Kaulūta chief Vīrayasas (*c.* 1st century A. D.), as reproduced by Cunningham along with the coins of the Audumbaras, may also admit of this interpretation (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 158). It has no doubt been described as ' a probable *dharmacakra* ' by Allan in the Introduction to his book (p. c.), but it can also be explained in the above manner. These symbols could well be utilised by all sects for their religious purpose and were never the monopoly of any particular one for all times and all places. A variant of the same *cakra*, but much less elaborate than the other two noted above, appears on the reverse of the copper coins of Acyuta, one of the kings uprooted by Samudragupta. It is of the same type as that held by the hand of the composite deity on the nicolo seal wrongly attributed to Huvishka by Cunningham. It should be remembered that Acyuta is one of the twenty-four names of Para Vāsudeva, the wielder of *Sudarśana*, and the Indians from early times had special predilection for adopting the names of the gods of their choice.

In the previous paragraphs, I have discussed the nature of the data supplied by coins about the iconic and aniconic religious practices of two of the major Brahmanical cults of ancient India. It is time now to consider what materials they supply us regarding the usage of the other sectaries, the worshippers of other principal Brahmanical gods and goddesses. Durga Prasad's attempts to read Tāntricism,

[1] For the symbol on the double-die Taxila coin, refer to Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 229; for the Ayodhya coins, refer to *ibid.*, pl. XVII. figs. 10-12; for the Vṛṣṇi coin refer to Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 70, pl. IV, fig. 15, and Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 281, pl. XVI, 5. Cunningham reproduced and described the unique Vṛṣṇi coin along with the two Audumbara coins, one silver and the other copper; he does not say anything about its provenance; but Allan says, it presumably hails from the northern Punjab. Allan remarks about its obverse—' The obverse is a pillar surmounted by an animal, half lion and half elephant, above which is a *nandipāda*.' p. clv.

especially associated with the Śakti worship, in the symbols of the ancient punch-marked coins are open to criticism, and his conclusions cannot be accepted with confidence. In the die-struck and cast coins, however, appear several female figures some of which can be shown to stand for different goddesses. Variants of Lakṣmī (Gaja-Lakṣmī, Śrī), the goddess of wealth and prosperity, have already been recognised on some of them. Allan observes, ' on the reverse of Bhadraghoṣa's coins (Pañcāla Mitra series) is a female deity standing on a lotus, whom we may identify as Bhadrā in allusion to the name of Bhadraghoṣa . . . . ;' he is diffident however, about identifying her with any of the goddesses bearing this epithet. She is probably none other than Lakṣmī, or she may also represent the goddess Durgā who is associated in one of her aspects with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva as Ekānaṃśā or Subhadrā ; in the *Skandapurāṇa* Kṛṣṇa is made to say, 'in the white fortnight of the month of Āṣāḍha, in the second day which is in the Puṣyā nakṣatra, after placing Bhadrā with Rāma and myself on the chariot . . .' (*Āṣāḍhasya site pakṣe dvitīyā puṣyasaṃyutā* | *Tasyāṃ rathe samāropya Rāmaṃ māṃ Bhadrayā saha* ‖—as quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma* under *Bhadrā*). The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* writes : *Ekānaṃśā kāryā devī Baladeva-Kṛṣṇayormadhye* | *Kaṭisaṃsthitavāmakarā sarojamitareṇa codvahatī* (ch. 57, verse 37).[1] Thus, the lotus in the hand alone would not always justify us in identifying the figure as Lakṣmī unless some other distinctive marks are present ; the lotus on which a few of these goddesses are made to stand is not also the characteristic of Lakṣmī alone, for the lotus pedestal is one of the commonest pedestals on which the images of cult divinities are placed in Gupta and post-Gupta art. The coins simply give earlier evidence ; they also emphasise another common pedestal used in earlier times, *viz.*, railing pedestal which has been invariably and in most cases quite unjusti-

[1] For the association of Ekānaṃśā Subhadrā with the Śakti (Durgā) in one of her aspects, refer to J. C. Ghosh's paper on Ekānaṃśā in *J.R.A.S.B.*, 1936, pp. 41-46 and Pl. 7. For Bhadraghoṣa's coins, refer to Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. cxvii, 197, and plates.

fiably described by Cunningham as 'Buddhist basement railing' in his account of early Indian coins. On the basis of these observations, one will be justified to hold that some of these female figures on coins with lotus in their right hands and their left hands resting on hip are variants of the goddess Durgā. Their association with particular animals, however, will help us to differentiate between these two classes of goddesses. Now, on the coins of the Kuninḍas, we almost invariably find a stag (at first incorrectly identified by Theobold as a buffalo) along with a goddess standing on lotus and holding a lotus flower in her right hand. S. V. Venkatesvara, in his article on Vedic Iconography discussed by me in the second chapter of this book, writes, 'In the latest (*Khila*) Vedic texts we have the goddess Śrī represented as a golden antelope adorned with garlands of silver and gold.' This form of the goddess is based on a passage in the *Śrī-Sūkta* (*R. V.*, Poona Edition, *Khila*, II. 6), and it is possible that we find in this 'coin device' both the human and animal forms of the goddess. The *Mahāmāyūrī* (verse 82) refers to the Yakṣa Uṣṭrapāda who was the special object of worship in the land of the Kuninḍas (*Uṣṭrapāda Kuninḍeṣu*). Uṣṭrapāda means a being, either human or animal, with the feet of a camel, and not a camel; if we recognise the Yakṣa Uṣṭrapāda in the animal represented on the Kuninḍa coins, then the attendant female figure alone may stand for Lakṣmī. The obverse of the coin type No. 30 of Azes in the *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I, p. 129, has been described by Whitehead as 'Goddess Lakṣmī standing to front with flower in raised right hand.' Gardner writes about the same device, 'a female deity facing, clad in himation; holds in raised right hand, flower; stands on lotus; beside her, lion? (Lakṣmī?).'[1] The forepart of the lion

[1] Gardner, *op.cit.*, p. 85, Pl. XIX. 5. Gardner says, 'It is probable that the goddess who appears on the coins of Azes as standing on a lotus, and holding a flower is either Pārvatī, the dread wife of Śiva, or Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune; the supposed lion, which seems to lie under her left elbow, may be after all only a lump of oxide' (p. lix). But the possibility of recognising the mount of the goddess is still there and in any way she is thoroughly an Indian goddess, be she Lakṣmi or Pārvatī. Coomaraswamy recognises in her Lakṣmī, in his article on 'Early Indian Iconography' noticed above.

is recognisable from his plate and this makes it highly probable that we find here a representation of Durgā-siṃhavāhinī, the consort of Śiva (Pl. IX, fig. 5). It is true that the lotus at her feet and the same flower in her raised right hand would indicate the possibility of her being Lakṣmī; but its nature may be more or less similar to that of the reverse device of the Chandragupta-Kumāradevī coins, and the lion-slayer type coins of Chandragupta II, in the imperial Gupta series of gold coins. The goddess seated on a lion, holding a lotus flower or cornucopia in her left hand and a fillet in her right hand and with her feet sometimes resting on lotus led Allan to describe her as Lakṣmī or Ambikā (CGCBM, lxxii-lxxiii, lxxxiii). The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* passage has already been quoted in my support; many texts like the Āgamas give us more or less identical descriptions of two-armed Durgā-Gaurī images (*Dakṣiṇe cotpalaṃ haste vāmahastaṃ pralambitam...*). It is true that the Syrian or Elamite goddess Nanaia is occasionally represented on some Kushan coins and seals as riding on a lion (Pl. I, fig. 24)[1]; but the mode of her presentation is quite different from the device under discussion.[1] The goddess in the Azes coin, however, is purely Indian; her graceful *tribhaṅga* pose, the *kaṭihasta* feature and the raised right hand holding lotus are all Indian characteristics. The magnificent 'humped bull' on the reverse (Pl. IX, fig. 6), evidently Śiva in his animal form, also supports the identification of the goddess as Durgā. That Śiva was the god *par excellence* in the Gandhāra region has already been noted; it is no wonder that his consort Ambikā should also be well recognised as an object of worship in the same locality. Hiuen Tsang's reference to the shrine of Bhīmādevī, the spouse of Īśvara Deva (Śiva) in Gandhāra, as supported by the reference to Bhīmāsthāna in the *Mahābhārata*, previously mentioned, should be noted again in this connection. On some of the gold and copper coins of Huvishka also, appears a goddess who is described as Nana; we have already seen that OESO

[1] Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans*, p. 63, Pl. XXII, fig. 19.

(Bhaveśa or Śiva) is depicted in company with Nana on some of his gold coins (*CCIK*, pp. 65-66, Pl. XXIII, 2, and Whitehead *PMC*, Vol. I, p. 197, Pl. XVIII, 135). On the other coin of Huvishka noticed above in connection with Śiva device, Śiva is accompanied by another goddess who is described as Umā (*OMMO*). It has already been shown that we can correctly recognise the goddess Umā by her name on the gold coin of Huvishka in the Punjab Museum (*PMC*., Pl. XVIII, fig. 136); here, however, the goddess holds a cornucopia instead of a lotus. It should always be borne in mind that we do not get from others the help which is rendered to us by the Kushan die-cutters in naming the deity used as a device in particular dies. But that there lie hid some more Indian divinities among the medley of coin devices appearing on the Indo-Scythian and other coins is highly probable. The Śakas were ruling over part of northernmost India and it is natural to expect that they would show on their coins some of the Indian cult divinities, the objects of worship among their subjects for whose use these coins were issued. Several unidentified goddesses appear on the reverse sides of certain copper and silver coins of the Indo-Scythian rulers, Maues and Azes. Gardner remarks, ' When we reach the issues of king Maues (Pls. XVI, XVII), we find a wealth of most remarkable and original barbaro-Hellenic figures; a figure resembling Tyche (XVI, 3), holding in one hand a patera, in the other a wheel, who seems to be the original of the still more outlandish figure of Azes' coins (XVIII, 10, 11). . . .'[1] The so-called Tyche may after all be an Indian goddess, because the many-spoked wheel which is held by her left hand distinctly reminds us of the one placed in the hand of the ithyphallic figure of Śiva on a coin of Huvishka, as also of the other in the hand of the composite divinity in the Hephtalite seal (Pl. IX, fig. 2). Comparison may be made between this goddess on Maues ' bronze coins with the sculpture of a goddess discovered in the Mohmand country reproduced by V. A. Smith in his *History of Fine Arts in India and*

[1] P. Gardner, *British Museum Catalogue of the Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India*, p. lviii.

Ceylon (1st Ed., fig. 78); the latter is, however, four-armed, holding in her hands among other objects, a *cakra* and a *gadā*, and is most probably a Hellenistic representation of Vaiṣṇavī, the *śakti* of Viṣṇu. The goddess standing on a lotus, facing and holding an uncertain object in her raised right hand (a tree branch with three leaves attached to it?), with the left one resting on her hip, on the coins of Pañcāla Phalgunīmitra may depict the asterism Phalgunī whose name is borne by the striker (Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-5, and plates).[1] If it be a representation of Phalgunī at all, its iconography is in no way similar to that of Pūrva-Phalgunī or Uttara-Phalgunī as it appears in the late compilation of Hemādri. Pūrva-Phalgunī is described by him as elephant-faced, red-coloured, two-armed with parrot in her hands and seated upon a wheel (*Pūrvā hasti-mukhā sphasthā śukahastadvayāruṇā*), while Uttara-Phalgunī is tiger-faced, riding on a cow, white in colour, her four hands holding sun, moon, rosary and *khaṭvāṅga* (*Vyāghrānanottarā gosthā śubhravarṇā caturbhujā* l *Dvyakṣiṇī sūtrakhaṭvāṅgadhāriṇī parikīrttitā; akṣiṇī* here means sun and moon).

Sūrya appears frequently as an object of worship on the early tribal coins of India. But the mode of his representation is not anthropomorphic. The commonest symbol to be found on the early punch-marked coins of India, designated by scholars as solar, is the wheel and its numerous variants (Pl. II, fig. 6). Foucher finds in them so many forms of the *Dharmacakra* symbol; but the previous suggestion that most of them stand for the sun is more acceptable. We have already seen that spoked wheel and its variants appearing on some tribal coins may stand for the Sudarśana of Viṣṇu, and Vedic Viṣṇu was an aspect of the Sun god with whom Vāsudeva was identified. On some of the earliest coins in the punch-marked series and on the Eran money (dated as early as the 3rd century B. C.), we very frequently find the figure of the lotus; in the latter the eight-petalled lotus is

[1] For some detailed observations of mine on the Indian elements in the coin devices of early foreign rulers of this country, the reader is referred to *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 293 ff.

clearly recognisable (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 143). Now, the lotus was intimately connected with the sun from very ancient times; it played a conspicuous part in the mythology of Brahmanism, and its association with the sun is fully borne out by the evidence of the Purāṇas which enjoin the execution in sculpture of a twelve-petalled lotus, on different petals of which figures of the different aspects of the sun god are to be placed with the god Bhāskara on the central pericarp (*karṇikā*).[1] The lotus symbolising the sun and the creative force (Sūrya is Savitṛ—*sarvasya prasavitṛ*, the producer of all) came to hold a unique place in Indian art of all ages and all religious creeds; the author of the *Viṣṇudharmottara* realised the importance of this motif in iconographic art and gave full and detailed instructions for its mode of representation (Book III, Ch. 45, Vv. 1-8). In the sculptures of divinities, lotus is the commonest symbol found in their hands. Some of the lotuses, at least those on early coins, may be taken to represent the sun. In this connection, reference may be made to the so-called Taurine symbol very frequently found on these as well as on later coins of India. It was suggested by me long ago that it might symbolise the sun and the moon represented together, the disc symbolising the former, the latter being symbolised by the crescent attached to it.[2] A few round cast copper coins of Kāḍa (probably a tribal name) of the 3rd century B.C. bear on one of their sides a large rayed circle which has been correctly described by Allan as ' Sun ' (Allan, *CAI*, p. 145). But the clearest and the most significant way of representing the Sun god as a rayed disc enshrined as an object of worship is to be found among the devices of certain tribal coins which can be dated from ' 200

[1] Hemādri in his *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, *Vratakhaṇḍa*, Pt. II, pp. 528-33, 536-37 and 539, quotes from the *Bhaviṣya-*, *Skanda-* and *Matsya-Purāṇas*, the respective passages dealing with Divākara Vratam, Āsāditya Vratam and Sūryanakta Vratam. See also Hemādri, *ibid.*, p. 553, about Sūrya Vrata from *Saura Dharma*: " *Upalipya śucau deśe Sūryaṃ tatra samarccayet | Saṃlikhet tatra padmantu dvādaśāraṃ sakarṇikam*||

[2] *Indian Antiquary*, 1925; J. N. Banerjee on 'The Representation of Sūrya in Brahmanical Art ', p. 162, fn. 6. C. L. Fabri has made the same suggestion in his article on ' The Punch-marked coins : A Survival of the Indus Civilisation ', *J.R.A.S.*, 1935, p. 314.

B.C. to the end of the first century B.C.' (Allan). These are the coins of Sūryamitra and Bhānumitra in the series described by Cunningham as 'Pañcāla Mitra' ; in the former, the god is represented ' as a ball from which rays radiate ; below it is the symbol, and the whole is placed on a platform, as usual between two pillars with cross-bars,' while in the latter he is also shown as ' a radiate globe placed immediately on a railed platform between two pillars' (Allan, *CAI*, pp. cxviii-cxix, 193, 195, 197). The relationship between the name of the issuer as well as the deity reproduced on these coins has already been emphasised ; now, what is most interesting is that we find here an unmistakable evidence of the Brahmanic symbol for the sun used in sacrificial rites as a regular object of worship (Pl. II, fig. 8). The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* tells us that in piling the fire altar, a disc of gold was placed on it to represent the sun (*Ś.B.*, VII, 4. 1. 10) ; in Sūryamitra's coins, the symbol upon which the rayed disc of the god is placed is very likely the summary representation of the fire altar, which is conspicuous by its absence in the coins of Bhānumitra. Now, there can be very little doubt that at the time when these coins were being issued, the Vedic sacrificial system had been much mixed up with far-reaching religious changes, and thus it happens that the sun-symbol appears in the rôle of an *arcā* or an image on these coins. As regards the anthropomorphic representation of this god on coins, we do not find any such on the early indigenous coins of India ; but figures of the sun in human form are met with on certain coins issued by the alien rulers of India like the Indo-Greeks and Kushans. These figures of the Sun god, however, are associated with non-Indian cults of the ancient Greeks and Zoroastrians, and known by such names as Helios, Mihira, etc. A few of them should be noticed here, for they furnish us with instances of some parallel forms on the one hand, and cases of distant alien prototypes of some variety of Indian Sūrya figures on the other. The figure of Helios riding on a four-horsed chariot appearing as the reverse-device on the coins of the ephemeral Bactrian Greek King Plato, probably a sub-king

of the line of Eukratides, has its parallel in the figure of the Indian Sun god driving in a chariot drawn by four horses as carved on one of the railing pillars at Bodh Gaya. There is some faint resemblance between these two Indian and non-Indian representations of the god, but it can, on no account, be suggested that the coin device of Plato could ever have served as the model of the Bodh Gaya relief. But the figure of the Sun god depicted on the obverse side of a bronze coin of Philoxenus deserves special notice here. It has been described by Gardner in this manner, ' Sun god, facing, radiate, clad in chiton, himation and boots; holds in l. hand long sceptre; r. extended.' A comparison of this figure with that of Helios or Mihira on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka will fully prove that such a type of representation of the god like the former must have served as the prototype of the latter. The North-Indian sun icons of the Gupta or earlier periods, again, were close adaptations of such alien forms of the deity, as the peculiar type of sun cult prevalent in parts of northern, eastern and western India was a modified form of the east Iranian sun cult of ancient times.[1]

Another deity who can be recognised without doubt on some of the tribal coins of ancient India as well as on the coins of the Kushan emperor Huvishka is Skanda Kārttikeya. Though he has not found a place in the stereotyped list of the five principal gods of the five chief cults (*viz.*, Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Saura, Śākta and Gāṇapatya) as formulated in later texts (*Pañcopāsanā*, the worship of *Gaṇesādi Pañcadevatā*), numismatic evidence distinctly proves that his images or emblems were certainly highly venerated by a good many people of ancient India. He was worshipped by some Indian kings and tribes, such as Kumāragupta I of the Gupta dynasty and the Yaudheyas, who had special reason to court

[1] For Plato's coin, *cf.* P. Gardner, *op. cit.*, Pl. VI, Fig. 11, and Bodh Gaya relief, Coomaraswamy, H.I.I.A., Pl. XVII, Fig. 61; for Philoxenus' coin device, *cf.* Gardner, *op. cit.*, Pl. XIII, Fig. 9, and Helios or Mihira on Kushan coins, *ibid*, Pl. XXVI, Figs. 2, 10; Pl. XXVIII, Figs. 2-4, etc.; for the present writer's views about the evolution of the North-Indian Sūrya image and the cult, *cf* *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 66 ff.

his favour. Some other kings also seem to have paid homage to him. On the reverse of a circular copper coin of Devamitra, a local king of Ayodhyā of an early date (c. 1st century A.D.) we find a symbol which has been described by V. A. Smith as ' Cock on top of post ' (Pl. II, fig. 5); on some coins of Vijayamitra of the same series also we find the same device (Nos. 31 & 32 in the series). It can justifiably be presumed that it was based on a cock-crested column special to Kārttikeya. This suggestion is further supported by the carved pillar shaft and the cock capital found at Lala Bhagat, noticed in the preceding chapter.[1] I have already shown that the standing figure carrying staff and vase on certain Ujjayinī coins cannot be called Kārttikeya but should be described as Śiva. But the former god appears in human form sometimes in a polycephalous manner (six-headed) on one unique silver and certain copper coins of the Yaudheyas, belonging to the second century A.D. The obverse of one class of these coins bears the six-headed but two-armed Kārttikeya (Ṣaḍānana), holding a long spear (*śakti*, the emblem special to Kārttikeya) in his right hand, the left hand resting on hip; the reverse bears the goddess, presumably Lakṣmī, with an aureole round her head, and not a six-headed goddess as Cunningham describes. The legend on the silver coin has been reconstructed by Allan as *Yaudheya-bhāgavata-svāmino Brahmaṇya* (*sa* or *sya*) and on the copper coins as *Bhāgavata-svāmino Brahmaṇya-devasya* (or *sa*) *Kumārasya* (or *sa*) (Allan, *CAI*, p. cxlix, cl), Allan renders the two legends into English in this manner: ' Of Brahmaṇya (a name of Kārttikeya), the divine lord of the Yaudheyas' and 'of Kumāra, the divine lord Brahmaṇya-

[1] V. A. Smith, *CCIM*, Vol. I, p. 151, Nos. 29, 31, 32. Sometimes the cock is placed ' on ground in front of post ', as on No. 29 of Vijayamitra. Allan does not tell us anything about the pillar, but in his Plate XVII, fig. 22, a coin of Vijayamitra is reproduced with the device of the ' cock on pillar '; in the body of the *Catalogue*, he invariably describes the bird as a cock, but in his introduction (p. lxxxix) he writes about it as ' a bird, usually called a cock but probably a *haṃsa*.' I have seen the above coins of Devamitra and Vijayamitra in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and I have no doubt that Smith's description is correct. Considered along with the Lala Bhagat finds, the above suggestion should be accepted.

deva.' In both the cases the genitive case-ending of the name of the divinity and of the attributive epithet *svāmī* (the reading *Bhagavato* in place of *Bhāgavata* would better fit in with the general sense of the coin legend) shows that the coins were issued in the name of the deity. This is very interesting, because it shows that the Yaudheyas had dedicated their state to the god of their choice who was regarded by them not only as their spiritual but also as their temporal ruler.[1]

Sir John Marshall's description of a very well-executed terracotta seal with inscriptions in characters of the 3rd or 4th century A.D., found by him in course of excavations at Bhita, and his illuminating remarks on them deserve attention in this connection. It is the seal of a ruling chief; it has in its field a pile of balls (evidently a mountain) with a post on its either side, a waved line (river?) below and sun and crescent (moon) above; the legend around the margin is '*Śrī Vindhyavedhamahārājasya Maheśvara-Mahāsenātisṛṣṭa-rājyasya Vṛṣadhvajasya Gautamīputrasya.*' Marshall translates it as follows: "Of the illustrious Mahārājā Gautamīputra Vṛṣadhvaja, the penetrator of the Vindhyas, who had made over his kingdom to the great Lord Kārttikeya." The appellation *Maheśvara-Mahāsenātisṛṣṭa-rājyasya* is significant. He remarks, 'It seems to indicate that in ancient times there may have existed a pious custom according to which rulers on the occasion of their accession entrusted their kingdom to their *iṣṭadevatā* and considered themselves as their mere agents.' He also cites the analogical case of Travancore rulers who call themselves Padmanābhadāsa, they being mere agents of the Lord Padmanābha. I may observe here that I had suggested my interpretation of the particular Kuniṇḍa and Yaudheya coin legends, before I read Marshall's remarks on this particular seal.

[1] V. A. Smith suggested that these coins were issued by a chief calling himself Svāmī Brahmaṇya Yaudheya. A proper interpretation of the legend as well as that of the Chatreśvara coin of the Kuniṇḍas previously noted leads to one conclusion—that suggested by me. The topic of the existence of a type of theocracy based on such numismatic data has been elaborately dealt with by me in *J.N.S.I.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 160-63.

Rohitaka, the country of the Yaudheyas, the *āyudhajīvī* Kṣatriyas, also known as Mattamayūrakas, was the specially favoured residence of the god as we know from the *Mahābhārata* passage (II. 32, 4-5):—*Tato bahudhanaṃ ramyaṃ gavāḍhyaṃ dhanadhānyavat | Kārttikeyasya dayitaṃ Rohītakamupādravat | Tatra yuddhaṃ mahaccāsīt surairmattamayūrakaiḥ.* Rohitaka (modern Rohtak where B. Sahni discovered a large number of Yaudheya coin moulds) 'being specially favoured by Kārttikeya' means that he was the tutelary god of the region, where there must have been many shrines dedicated to him, the cult image enshrined in them being used as a coin device.[1] The *Mahāmāyūrī* also informs us that Kumāra Kārttikeya was the world-famed tutelary deity of Rohitaka (ver. 21, *Rohitake Kārttikeyaḥ Kumāro lokaviśrutaḥ*). As regards the name Svāmi Brahmaṇya or Svāmī Brahmaṇyadeva Kumāra, reference may be made to the Bilsaḍ stone pillar inscription of Kumāragupta I (date 96 G.E. = 415-16 A.D.), which records some additions by one Dhruvaśarman to the temple of Svāmī Mahāsena already existing in the locality.[2] The iconographic type of Kārttikeya differs on the other class of the Yaudheya coins (class 6 of Allan) of a quite late date (3rd-4th century A.D.), which show undoubted Kushan influence; the one-faced War-god stands facing, his right hand holding a spear and the left resting on hip, with his *vāhana* on the left (the peacock is not usually shown on the other type—a few specimens of

[1] In the Jarāsandhavadha parvādhyāya of the *Mahābhārata* (II. 21, 9), Kṛṣṇa, while recounting to Bhīma and Arjuna the characteristic excellence of Rājagṛha, says that in Rājagṛha was the residence of Svastika and Maṇināga (*Svastikasyālayaścātra Maṇināgasya cottamaḥ*). This means that there were shrines of Svastika and Maṇināga at Rājagṛha; excavations in the locality known even now as 'Maniyār Maṭh' at Rajgir by the Indian Archaeological department have brought to light much interesting evidence of the once flourishing snake-cult at that place (*cf.* M. Bh., III. 84, 107).

[2] Fleet, CII, III, pp. 44-5; the name Brahmaṇyadeva is also ascribed here to the god:—'*bhagavatastrailokyatejassambhārasaṃtatādbhutamūrtter... Brahmaṇyadevasya . . . Svāmi Mahāsenasyāyatane*, etc., etc. Bilsaḍ is in the Etah district of U. P. and is about 140 miles to the south-east of Rohitaka or Rhotak. The Vākāṭaka Mahārāja Rudrasena I is frequently described in the Vākāṭaka copper-plate inscriptions as *atyanta Svāmi-Mahābhairavabhaktasya*, i.e., a great devotee of Svāmī Mahābhairava, evidently a terrific form of Śiva.

deva.' In both the cases the genitive case-ending of the name of the divinity and of the attributive epithet *svāmī* (the reading *Bhagavato* in place of *Bhāgavata* would better fit in with the general sense of the coin legend) shows that the coins were issued in the name of the deity. This is very interesting, because it shows that the Yaudheyas had dedicated their state to the god of their choice who was regarded by them not only as their spiritual but also as their temporal ruler.[1]

Sir John Marshall's description of a very well-executed terracotta seal with inscriptions in characters of the 3rd or 4th century A.D., found by him in course of excavations at Bhita, and his illuminating remarks on them deserve attention in this connection. It is the seal of a ruling chief; it has in its field a pile of balls (evidently a mountain) with a post on its either side, a waved line (river?) below and sun and crescent (moon) above; the legend around the margin is '*Śrī Vindhyavedhamahārājasya Maheśvara-Mahāsenātisṛṣṭa-rājyasya Vṛṣadhvajasya Gautamīputrasya.*' Marshall translates it as follows: "Of the illustrious Mahārājā Gautamīputra Vṛṣadhvaja, the penetrator of the Vindhyas, who had made over his kingdom to the great Lord Kārttikeya." The appellation *Maheśvara-Mahāsenātisṛṣṭa-rājyasya* is significant. He remarks, 'It seems to indicate that in ancient times there may have existed a pious custom according to which rulers on the occasion of their accession entrusted their kingdom to their *iṣṭadevatā* and considered themselves as their mere agents.' He also cites the analogical case of Travancore rulers who call themselves Padmanābhadāsa, they being mere agents of the Lord Padmanābha. I may observe here that I had suggested my interpretation of the particular Kuninḍa and Yaudheya coin legends, before I read Marshall's remarks on this particular seal.

[1] V. A. Smith suggested that these coins were issued by a chief calling himself Svāmī Brahmaṇya Yaudheya. A proper interpretation of the legend as well as that of the Chatreśvara coin of the Kuninḍas previously noted leads to one conclusion—that suggested by me. The topic of the existence of a type of theocracy based on such numismatic data has been elaborately dealt with by me in *J.N.S.I.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 160-63.

Rohitaka, the country of the Yaudheyas, the *āyudhajīvī* Kṣatriyas, also known as Mattamayūrakas, was the specially favoured residence of the god as we know from the *Mahābhārata* passage (II. 32, 4-5):—*Tato bahudhanaṃ ramyaṃ gavāḍhyaṃ dhanadhānyavat* | *Kārttikeyasya dayitaṃ Rohītakamupādravat* | *Tatra yuddhaṃ mahaccāsīt surairmattamayūrakaiḥ.* Rohitaka (modern Rohtak where B. Sahni discovered a large number of Yaudheya coin moulds) 'being specially favoured by Kārttikeya' means that he was the tutelary god of the region, where there must have been many shrines dedicated to him, the cult image enshrined in them being used as a coin device.[1] The *Mahāmāyūrī* also informs us that Kumāra Kārttikeya was the world-famed tutelary deity of Rohitaka (ver. 21, *Rohitake Kārttikeyaḥ Kumāro lokaviśrutaḥ*). As regards the name Svāmi Brahmaṇya or Svāmī Brahmaṇyadeva Kumāra, reference may be made to the Bilsaḍ stone pillar inscription of Kumāragupta I (date 96 G.E.=415-16 A.D.), which records some additions by one Dhruvaśarman to the temple of Svāmī Mahāsena already existing in the locality.[2] The iconographic type of Kārttikeya differs on the other class of the Yaudheya coins (class 6 of Allan) of a quite late date (3rd-4th century A.D.), which show undoubted Kushan influence; the one-faced War-god stands facing, his right hand holding a spear and the left resting on hip, with his *vāhana* on the left (the peacock is not usually shown on the other type—a few specimens of

[1] In the Jarāsandhavadha parvādhyāya of the *Mahābhārata* (II. 21, 9), Kṛṣṇa, while recounting to Bhīma and Arjuna the characteristic excellence of Rājagṛha, says that in Rājagṛha was the residence of Svastika and Maṇināga (*Svastikasyālayaścātra Maṇināgasya cottamaḥ*). This means that there were shrines of Svastika and Maṇināga at Rājagṛha; excavations in the locality known even now as 'Maniyār Maṭh' at Rajgir by the Indian Archaeological department have brought to light much interesting evidence of the once flourishing snake-cult at that place (*cf.* M. Bh., III. 84, 107).

[2] Fleet, CII, III, pp. 44-5; the name Brahmaṇyadeva is also ascribed here to the god:—'*bhagavatastrailokyatejassambhārasaṃtatādbhutamūrtter... Brahmaṇyadevasya . . . Svāmi Mahāsenasyāyatane*, etc., etc. Bilsaḍ is in the Etah district of U. P. and is about 140 miles to the south-east of Rohitaka or Rhotak. The Vākāṭaka Mahārāja Rudrasena I is frequently described in the Vākāṭaka copper-plate inscriptions as *atyanta Svāmi-Mahābhairavabhaktasya*, i.e., a great devotee of Svāmī Mahābhairava, evidently a terrific form of Śiva.

which, however, show the god with one face radiate, *cf.* Allan, p. 272, Pl. XXIX, 22). Among the Indian Museum coins bearing the device of six-headed Brahmaṇyadeva, I could recognise the bird mount only on one specimen. Another elaborate iconographic type occurs on the reverse of the ' peacock type ' gold coins of Kumāragupta I. It shows the god Kārttikeya nimbate riding on the peacock (Paravāṇī) holding spear in left hand over shoulder, his right hand being in the *varada* pose; his figure is placed on an elaborate *pañcaratha* pedestal, commonly found in Indian art of the late Gupta and subsequent periods. There can be very little doubt that here we find a replica of the image of the favourite deity of Kumāragupta I—probably the very image enshrined in a temple built by the Gupta King in the royal capital. The iconographic importance of the type cannot be too sufficiently stressed. Smith's description of it as 'goddess (Kumārīdevī?)' was corrected by Allan as ' Kārttikeya nimbate '; but a part of Allan's description will have to be modified. He writes that the god sprinkles incense on altar on r. with right hand and the peacock stands on a kind of platform. The altar appears to be nothing but two of the re-entrants of the right side of the pedestal (*pīṭhikā*) on which the god with his mount is shown and the right hand thus does not sprinkle incense but is really shown in the iconographic pose of *varada*, i.e., that of conferring a boon (Pl. X, fig. 5).[1]

Huvishka was the only foreign ruler who had this god reproduced under various names, such as Skanda, Kumāra, Viśākha, and Mahāsena, on the reverse side of some of his coins. The iconography of Skanda-Viśākha as delineated in them requires careful study. Mahāsena, another form of Skanda, is shown nimbate, clad in an undergarment covered over by a long flowing cloak (like the *saṃghāṭi* usually found in the Buddha figures—not chlamys as Gardner

[1] Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-14, Pl. XVI, 3; Allan, *CCGDBM*, pp. 84 ff. and plates. Kumāragupta was certainly in urgent need of the graces of the War-god Kārttikeya, for the last period of his rule was troubled by the ruthless invasions of the Huṇas and the Puṣyamitras, and his special predilection for this martial god is also manifest in the name of one of his sons, *viz.*, Skanda, if not of himself.

suggests) holding a standard surmounted by a bird (rude peacock—*cf. Barhiketu* as one of the epithets of Kārttikeya—*Skandaḥ Kumārarūpaḥ śaktidharo barhiketuśca, Bṛhat-saṃhitā*, Ch. 57, v. 41) and his left hand rests on the hilt of the sword which is tied to his waist-girdle (Pl. X, fig. 9). Next we find Skanda-Kumāra and Viśākha standing face to face similarly dressed, the former holding in his right hand a standard surmounted by a bird (it is not clear in the reproduction; what seems a bird might be a combination of the letter M of KOMARO and part of the hair or turban of the god) while the latter or both of them hold a long spear (Pl. X, fig. 6). On the coin, Viśākha is shown clasping the right hand of Skanda-Kumāra who touches the former with his left hand (Gardner, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXVIII, fig. 22). Lastly, we find a shrine consisting of an ornamented double platform with a linear representation of a superstructure having inside it three figures on the pedestal; the whole device has been described by Gardner as "Niche on basis, within which, Skanda and Viśākha standing as above; between them Mahāsena, horned (?), facing, nimbate, clad in chlamys; sword at waist " (Pl. X, fig. 7).[1] Gardner's description of the three figures in the last-mentioned coin device may be correct, but the figure on the right does not seem to have any halo carved round the head, while the other two distinctly bear the traces of halo round their heads. But this point need not be stressed far, because, as I have previously observed, sometimes the aureole is missing from the heads of divinities on Kushan coins. The types of the three divinities enshrined, however, differ so widely from their representations on the other coins of Huvishka noted above, that they cannot but engage our attention. In any case, we have no grounds for supporting D. R. Bhandarkar in his assumption that on certain coins of Huvishka there are four figures corresponding to four different gods, *viz.*, Skanda, Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena (*Carmichael Lectures*,

[1] Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 138, Pl. XXVII, fig. 16; p. 149, Pl. XXVIII, figs. 22 and 23; p. 150, Pl. XXVIII, fig. 24.

1921, pp. 22-23). If these coins prove anything, they prove that there were three gods—or rather three aspects of the same god—*viz.*, Skanda-Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena. The *Mahābhārata* lays down Skanda's several forms as brothers or sons, *viz.*, Śākha, Viśākha, Naigameya; among his other names are Kumāra and Mahāsena; the very involved mythology which is presented to us by it about the origin of Skanda shows that various god-concepts of an allied character were merged in the composition of Skanda-Kārttikeya. Huvishka's coins inform us that the three (or two) gods had not lost their separate personal entity even then, though their iconography shows that they were to all intents and purposes the same god. Patañjali's mention of Skanda and Viśākha has been noticed on a previous occasion; these coin types bear out in a characteristic manner what is incidentally observed by him. The *Mahāmāyūrī* passage previously quoted shows that by the time the text was written (which must have been within a century and a half of Huvishka's time) Kārttikeya and Kumāra denoted the same deity having his famous shrine at Rohitaka.

Among the other members of the Brahmanic pantheon, whose effigies can be recognised among the early coin devices, mention may be made of Indra and Agni. Both of them appear on the reverse sides of the coins of Indramitra and Agnimitra respectively in the Pañcāla series. Jayagupta's coins in the same series may also show the god Indra on their reverse. On Indramitra's coins, Indra is crudely represented in two different ways; first, as standing, facing, on a pedestal, and holding an uncertain object in his right hand (*cf.* Allan's Pl. XXIX, figs. 1 and 2; a club seems to hang down from the left), and secondly, he is shown inside a domed shrine ('archway'—Allan), where other details are absolutely lacking (these are very small coins and very much corroded). Jayagupta's coins show the latter device on their reverse, marked by the same indistinctness. The reverse of Agnimitra's coins shows a deity standing facing on a railed platform between two pillars; five flames

represent his hair; his right hand is raised and the left rests on hip in the approved early Indian iconographic manner (*kaṭihasta*); some object (a sword or a club?) seems to project downwards from his hip. Most numismatists identify him as Agni; but Mme. Bazin Foucher finds in him the representation of Ādi Nāga, the 'presiding deity of Ahicchatra, the capital city of Pañcāla. She lays stress on the identity of the reverse device of Bhūmimitra's coins with the same of Agnimitra and describes the two as above. The deity on the former stands facing on a platform between two pillars, each with three cross-bars at the top. Cunningham described the figure as 'standing on Buddhist railing; head with five rays' and remarked, 'The figure is probably that of Bhūmi, or the earth personified' (*CAI*, p. 83). Allan observes about it, 'His attitude is similar to that of Agni, but his hair is represented by five snakes (nāgas). He holds a snake in his hands. One would expect a personification of the Earth goddess Bhūmi but as the figure is male, it is probably the king of the Nāgas representing the earth' (*CCAI*, P. cxviii). A careful inspection of the plates appearing in Cunningham's (Pl. VII, figs. 12-16) and Allan's books (Pl. XXVIII, figs. 5-14) shows that the two devices are almost identical, and whichever may be the designation of the one is the same as that of the other; but on some coins of Agnimitra (fig. 11 in Allan's plate) the deity is made to stand on a lotus, and shoots of flames or nāgas cannot be distinguished in the coin representations. R. Burns, however, says, 'The five lines are not identical on the two coins, those of Agnimitra ending in sharper points than those of Bhūmimitra. If these two figures are Nāgas, the difference is not important; while if one is of Agni, the iconographical explanation of that of Bhūmi is difficult, and I know no other representation of the Earth.'[1] Thus, the whole question is still an open one, and unless better preserved coins are available, no certainty

[1] Mme. Bazin Foucher's article appeared in *Etudes d'Orientalisme*, Musee Guimet, Vol. I, p. 145. For R. Burn's remarks quoted above, *cf. A.B.I.A.A.*, 1933, p. 24.

can be arrived at. The devices, tree within railing and the undulating line, may, in some cases, represent the residences of the different Yakṣas (*Vṛkṣacaityas*) and Nāgas, though there can be no doubt that in many more they stood for the *sthalavṛkṣas* and rivers.

Indra appears in the garb of Zeus on the coins of Eukratides, Antialkidas and a few other Indo-Greek rulers, and on those of Maues. On the *kaviśiye nagara devatā* coins of Eukratides, the god (usually described in the coin catalogues as Zeus) is shown seated left on throne, holding wreath in the right hand and palm branch in the left; the forepart of an elephant, rarely the whole animal, appears on the right and a conical object in the left field.[1] The same device appears on the reverse of several hemidrachmae of Antialkidas, where the object in the left field is, however, not distinct. Rapson definitely described the conical object as a mountain, and, to explain this type, he drew our attention to the statement of Hiuen Tsang regarding the elephant having been the presiding genius of the *Pi-lo-sho-lo* mountain to the south-west of Kapiśa. The Chinese traveller refers to a suburban city of Kapiśa, viz., *Si-pi-to-fa-la-tzu* which is the Chinese transliteration of *Śvetavatālaya* according to Watters. Now, *Śvetavatālaya* (the residence of Śvetavat, a name of Indra) and *Indrapura* are presumably one and the same, and the *Mahāmāyūrī* tells us that Indra was the tutelary deity of the latter. Indrapura is probably to be located in the north-west on account of its association with Varṇu, another locality in the same region. So, it is highly probable, if not certain, that we find on the above device representations of Indra in his theriomorphic as well as anthropomorphic forms, the latter being evidently identified with Zeus, the exact Greek counterpart of the Indian king of the gods (*devarāja*). On the reverse of an interesting silver coin of Antialkidas in the collection of the British Museum appears the same deity standing or

[1] Whitehead has doubted this identification; he thinks that the enthroned deity is female and may stand for Demeter or Tyche; *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1947 pp. 29-31. The present writer, however, accepts Rapson's suggestion that it stands for Zeus-Indra (*J.N.S.I.*, 1950, Presidential Address, pp. 7-8).

advancing to left with a long sceptre in his left hand and the right hand hanging down, and the elephant, with its trunk at the salute, Nike on its head and a bell round its neck, also striding to the left. Whitehead who noticed this coin device in his 'Notes on Indo-Greek Numismatics' in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1923 (pp. 325-6, Pl. XV, fig. 4) remarks, 'Apparently this quaint design shows the elephant-deity and his elephant indulging in a victorious march past.' Plate X, fig. I shows an exactly similar device which appears on the reverse of a silver coin in the collection of the Fitz-William Museum, Cambridge. Figure 2 in the same plate shows Zeus-Indra seated on throne holding Nike in his extended right hand; the forepart of the elephant with its trunk at the salute is facing the enthroned deity. The juxtaposition of the animal and the deity appears to suggest that in this representation of Greek Zeus, the king of the Olympic gods, we also find the Indian Indra, the Devarāja ('the king of the gods'). Thus, we see in the devices the simultaneous theriomorphic and anthropomorphic representations of Indra; just same is the mode of representing Śiva on some Ujjayinī coins and Kushan coins (the deity and his animal mount). On some square copper coins of Maues, however, we find a new orientation in the representation of Indra; on the obverse of the coins, numbered 12-13, in the British Museum (Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 70, Pl. XVI, fig. 9), the enthroned deity appears with a long sceptre in his left hand, while his right hand is placed on the shoulder of a human figure. Gardner described the latter as a 'small winged female figure'. But the wings and the female character of the figure are not at all clear from the plate; what he described as wings appear to be the prongs of the *vajra*. The figure, however, as has rightly been suggested by Gardner, 'seems to be an embodiment of the thunderbolt' (Pl. X, fig. 3). This reminds us of the Indian practice of occasionally representing the attributes in the hands of divinities as personified beings (*āyudhapuruṣas*). The iconography of Indra in the Hellenistic presentations of the god on the coins noted above partially tallies with the description of his image given in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira (*Śuklaścaturviṣāno*

dvipo Mahendrasya vajrapāṇitvam | *Tiryaglakāṭasaṃstham tṛtīyamapi locanaṃ cihnam*—ch. 57, v. 42).[1]

The Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇīs, so frequently represented in the pre-Christian and early post-Christian art of northern India, do not fail to make their appearance on early indigenous coins, though comparatively rarely. The Ujjayinī coins, again, furnish us with an important clue in this connection. Allan reproduces three coins in his *Catalogue* (Pl. XXXVI, figs. 1-3), the obverse sides of which bear, according to him, two draped female figures standing facing side by side, the one on the left holding an uncertain object in her raised right hand; a river with fishes is shown below (*ibid.*, p. 257). With regard to another fragmentary coin included by him in the same series, he remarks in his Introduction, ' Variety *c* (of the class 4 of the Ujjayinī coins, the two-figure coins belong to Var. *b* of the same class) is a broken coin, but seems to have had three figures on it; the type was probably the same as the three figures found on certain punch-marked silver coins (p. 37, 1).' He further says that he has grouped together as class 4 'four varieties with deities on the obverse' (of the remaining two varieties, one has the *abhiṣeka*-Lakṣmī or Gaja-Lakṣmī, the other has a standing figure and three other symbols). Now, two years before the publication of Allan's *Catalogue*, I published one square coin from Avantī or Ujjayinī, which is identical with the variety *b* of class 4 of Allan, just noticed. Then it was unique of its kind, and I remarked that it ' differs from all the known varieties of the Ujjayinī coins, in so far as its obverse side bears two human figures, a male and a female one. The dress and attitude of the figures remind us of a Yakṣa and Yakṣiṇī from Bhilsa (Nos. 190A and 191A in the archaeological collection of the Gwalior Museum) who are dressed similarly and represented in the same attitude.' I am certain about my description, because the male figure bears on its neck the *graiveyaka* ornament which is so frequently worn by the Yakṣas found at Mathura, Gwalior and other places. It is thus highly probable that on this variety of coins hailing from Ujjayinī and of a date as early as the 2nd century B.C., if not earlier, we find a comparatively early representation of the Yakṣa and Yakṣiṇī couple.[1] As regards the Nāga devices on coins, I may draw the attention of scholars to the cast coins (Nos. 21 and 22) reproduced in Plate II of Cunningham's *Coins of Ancient India*. The author remarks about them, "Nos. 21 and 22 are cast coins, on which a snake is the prominent figure. The legend, in Aśoka characters, reads *Kāḍasa*, which may, perhaps, have some reference to the descendants of the serpents called Kāḍru " (p. 62). Allan distinguishes as many as five varieties of the same coin and describes one of the devices on them as 'undulating line presumably representing a snake'; but from one observation of his with regard to Var. *d* of the same series, *viz.*, 'one side is completely filled by an elephant and the other has the usual snake, taurine and legend,' it is certain that he accepts Cunningham's suggestion (Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India*, pp. xcii-xciii). Nāgas depicted as human beings with snakehoods attached to the back of their heads, a type often found in early and late Indian art, have been recognised by Mme. Bazin Foucher in the reverse devices of the two Pañcāla kings, Agnimitra and Bhūmimitra. But I have already shown above that her suggestion has not been universally accepted.

In the foregoing survey of the devices on the early indigenous and foreign coins of India, a few points are to be noted. Some of the symbols appearing on the early punch-marked and cast coins seem undoubtedly based on the religious practices of their issuers. On the local and tribal cast and die-struck coins that are Indian in character, we find the

[1] I am not sure whether the elephant's head which appears on the obverse of some round copper coins of Demetrius and Maues has anything to do with Śvetavat, the mount of Indra; Demetrius and Lysias are sometimes shown with elephant's scalp on the top of their diademed heads. All these points have been discussed by me in my article on ' Indian Elements in Coin Devices of Early Foreign Rulers of India,' in *Indian Historical Quarterly* (Vol. XIV, 1938, pp. 293-308, and the accompanying plate, figs. 1-4).

[1] This Ujjayinī coin was published by me in *I.H.Q.*, Vol. X, 1934, pp. 723-25 and plate.

continuation of devices already met with in the earlier series, with this difference that now their nature is more clearly understandable than in their previous presentation. It should also be borne in mind that the same device was equally available to the various sectaries of those days to illustrate their own religious faith, and a *cakra*, which in one place might definitely represent Buddhist *dharmacakra*, could in another setting stand for the Sudarśana emblem of Viṣṇu, which, as we have shown, is a symbol of the Sun god. Coomaraswamy rightly remarks, 'The vocabulary of these symbols was equally available to all sects, Brahmans, Buddhists and Jains, each employing them in senses of their own' (*HIIA*, p. 44). Cunningham was oblivious about it, and he invariably described the railing, so frequently to be found on these coins, as 'Buddhist basement railing', the tree as 'Bodhi tree', the pillar as 'Buddhist pillar', and so on. In these early cast and die-struck coins, however, we light upon the representations of regular icons, which were objects of worship, and various gods and goddesses make their appearance with somewhat elaborate iconographic features. In the case of the oft-reproduced deity on the coins, *viz.*, Śiva, his various types show that varieties of Śaiva icons were being made on which these coin devices were based. Again, such observations of previous scholars, that 'the appearance of the figure of Śiva and not a Liṅga as an object of worship on the Kushan coins clearly shows that up to the time of the Kushan king Vāsudeva, Śiva worship had not come to be identified with Liṅga worship' will have to be set aside. D. R. Bhandarkar observes further in his *Carmichael Lectures* (pp. 19-21) that Śiva was certainly being worshipped in his anthropomorphic form up till the 7th century A.D., for 'Śiva recumbent on his mount' figures on the reverse of Śaśāṅka's gold coins. But on the basis of evidence of much earlier coins and seals, we know for certain that Śiva was also being worshipped in his phallic form. That phallicism was a part of Śiva worship in the time of Huvishka is fully proved by the ithyphallic (*urdhvaliṅga*) feature of the unique figure of the composite god on one of the gold coins of this Kushan emperor already noted. Much

earlier evidence in the shape of the uninscribed cast coin (provenance unknown) and the die-struck coins from Ujjayinī and Taxila has been produced. The Ujjayinī coins are specially interesting from this point of view, because some of them portray Śiva in human form, while others show his phallic form, proving that Śiva was being worshipped there in both these forms simultaneously. Another point worth noticing is that though Śiva used to be represented mostly in his bull form in the Gandhāra region (*cf.*, Hesychius' statement quoted above), still by the time the Kushans had begun their rule, the bull was regarded as his mount, and his human form was predominant. This is proved by the many extant coins of the Śaiva Kushan emperor, Wema Kadphises. In the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka, it was not even thought necessary to associate his theriomorphic form with the anthropomorphic one. But in Vāsudeva's time, the older practice was resumed, and thenceforward Śiva, in several aspects of his representation, was never to be dissociated from his mount. In the shrines which had invariably the Liṅga enshrined in the main sanctum, the bull Nandin was always given a prominent place in front of it, in order that he may always look at his lord in the symbolic form (*cf.*, my observations about Śiva and bull on an Ujjayinī coin). It should not also be forgotten that, by the time of Huvishka, the movement for cult amalgam and for combining the iconography of two or more different cult divinities had already begun, which was to culminate in later times in the Smārta cult of *Pañcopāsanā*. While assigning attributes to the deity, the Kushan die-cutters were drawing also upon earlier indigenous modes, for, as we have seen, the staff and water-vessel which are the characteristic emblems of Śiva in the Ujjayinī coins are also used by them. The three heads of Śiva are figured too after the earlier mode, and most of the features are based on indigenous mythological details. The plastic form of this deity, as well as of the other deities appearing on the Kushan money, is no doubt Hellenistic, but the subject was purely Indian. The indigenous Śiva in human form was unquestionably earlier in appearance, for all scholars assign the Ujjayinī coins to the third-second

centuries B.C., which was at least a century earlier than Śiva's first appearance on the money of one of the foreign rulers of India, *viz.*, Maues. I recognised Śiva for the first time in two coin devices, hitherto unidentified, of this Indo-Scythic ruler. The staff and water-vessel carrying human figure can be traced to some of the punch-marked coins described by Allan (*op. cit.*, Introduction, xxxvi ; see Pl. I, fig. 4).[1] Vāsudeva Viṣṇu, though some of his emblems, such as *cakra*, etc., are sometimes reproduced, figures somewhat rarely on the early indigenous coins; but it must be observed that even in the Gupta period, of which extant Viṣṇu images are known, none of the coins of the devout Bhāgavata kings bear on them any effigy of Viṣṇu. The Paramabhāgavatas, however, invariably used the Garuḍa emblem on most of their coins, thus showing their cult affiliation. Of the other gods, Brahmaṇya-Kumāra was frequently reproduced on certain coins. The name Brahmaṇya was evidently the base of Subrahmaṇya, in which name this god is generally worshipped in the south. The god had several iconographic types, as the coins show, which also prove that much of the mythology about him was already in existence in the 2nd century A.D. As regards several other constituents of the Brahmanic pantheon, the Pañcāla Mitra coins supply us with some useful data. It has rightly been observed that 'the reverses are of special interest to the student of Hindu iconography, as we have nothing similar elsewhere of so early a data' (Allan). It is regrettable that their usefulness has to a certain extent been minimised by the smallness of the size of some and the imperfect state of preservation of others. The goddess Durgā-Pārvatī is not clearly recognisable in any of the early

[1] Allan describes a symbol on some punch-marked coins closely related to those which contain the above, as ' a rudely made human figure with the dumb-bell symbols on either side,' and thinks that both probably represent the same deity named Kārttikeya. But I have shown that Śiva is the god that is figured on the other type. As regards the rudely made human figure, it might have been based on the ' golden man ' in the Agnicayana ceremony; the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* expressly refers to one mode of making him, ' Let him make no arms to this golden man, lest he should cause him to be redundant; for these two spoons are (in lieu of) his arms.' In the coin devicé, this rudely made figure is without arms and the dumb-bell-like symbols (spoons?) are on either side; see Pl. I, fig. 26.

indigenous coins, though some of the female figures appearing on their reverse, and usually identified as Lakṣmī, may represent her. On some coins of Azes I, she may be recognised if we are certain about the identity of the forepart of her lion mount beside her. But, without doubt, she figures on a few coins of Huvishka; Rapson was the first to identify her correctly. In one of the two figures, a female carrying a lotus flower in her hand, and standing by the side of a male figure (Śiva), on the reverse side of a gold coin of Huvishka in the British Museum collection, the die-cutter definitely puts down her name in four Greek letters by her side, which were correctly read by Rapson as OMMO (Umā). I read the name by the side of a female figure appearing singly on the reverse of a gold coin of the same Kushan emperor in the collection of the Lahore Museum. But this time she is made to hold a cornucopia, after the manner of an Ardochso, a Demeter or a Tyche (as represented on the money of the Indo-Greek and the Indo-Scythic rulers), showing clearly how these Indian deities were being presented in their Hellenistic garb. The reverses of some of the coins of Huvishka, thus like those of the Pañcāla Mitra coins, are of special interest to the students of Brahmanical iconography.

A line or two about the character of the art manifest in the treatment of the various figures on the coins noticed above will not be out of place here. In this way one can with some justification appraise indirectly the standard of art reached by the artist in different localities and different periods. But a word of caution is necessary here. The early punch-marked coins, which were current throughout India from c. 6th or 7th century B.C. to as late as the 1st or 2nd century A.D., do little justice to the standard of plastic art, however imperfect, that might have been reached by the indigenous artists before the Maurya period and afterwards. Sir John Marshall, after comparing the monetary technique of the Indians as manifest in the above coins with the same of another Indian ruler (?) Saubhūtī (Gr. form 'Sophytes') by name, who was a contemporary of Alexander and who adopted Greek style in his money, observes, " The rudimen-

tary character of Indian art at this period is well exemplified by the current indigenous coins known commonly as ' punch-marked, which are singularly crude and ugly, neither their form, which is unsymmetrical, nor the symbols which are stamped almost indiscriminately upon their surface, having any pretensions to artistic merit'' (*A Guide to Taxila*, 2nd Edition, p. 24).[1] This observation is true up to a certain point. Long after the practice of issuing this class of coins was discontinued, coins were being issued in different localities of India, almost down to modern times, that are singularly reminiscent of the former. Mention may only be made here of the crude copper pieces, usually known as *ḍhiṃglā* which were being manufactured by the goldsmiths of Umarda, under the orders of the old Udaypur State, to supply the State coffers with small token money (W. W. Webb, *The Currencies of Rajputana*, pp. 13-14). If we are to judge the standard of the art of the locality from that manifest in this type of money, then we shall give very little credit to it. It is a fact that the Indians, especially in their punch-marked coins, did not achieve any success in the matter of monetary technique. But they were not so unsuccessful in their cast coins, and the devices which they executed in the negative moulds sometimes show faint traces of modelling. The elephant, bull and other animal devices on the early rectangular cast coins, and the figure of Śrī-Lakṣmī on the uninscribed coin of Kausambi, and of Śiva and the Yakṣa couple on Ujjayinī coins, none of which can be dated later than the 2nd century B.C., some being much earlier, bear out my statement. There is no justification for tracing any foreign influence on the aforesaid types of coins, and the modelling of these animal or human figures follows the indigenous style adopted in contemporary sculptures of these motifs. It must be borne in mind that all these coins are made of molten copper and are mostly in a very

[1] Whitehead, however, has raised reasonable doubts about the Indian nationality of Sophytes; according to him, this ruler was an eastern satrap ruling in the Oxus region in the last quarter of the fourth century B.C. (*Num. Chron.*, 1943, pp. 60-72 and plates).

imperfect state of preservation, many of their details being obliterated owing to their long circulation millennia ago. The figure of Śiva-Vispamitra (Viśvāmitra) on the bi-scriptual silver coins of the Audumbara chief Dharaghoṣa, however, show foreign influence, as the over-emphasis of muscles in the body indicates; these silver pieces appear to have been based on the money of the Indo-Greek rulers like Euthydemus II and Apollodotus. The device, however, is taken from Indian mythology. The bi-scriptual silver pieces of the Kuninḍas also, though their devices are all indigenous, are reminiscent of the Greek monetary technique. The figures of Śiva on the Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian and Kushan coins, and the very remarkable figure of the composite god on a nicolo seal, wrongly attributed by Cunningham to Huvishka, are undoubtedly Hellenistic in character, and there can be very little doubt that they were based on similar plastic forms of the divinities current in the extreme north of India. The deities appearing on the coins of the Imperial Gupta rulers illustrate in a very characteristic manner the peculiar features of the Gupta style of sculpture.

CHAPTER V

Deities and their Emblems on Early Indian Seals

Like the numismatic remains of ancient India, her glyptic ones also throw a flood of light on the mode of representing her divinities in different periods. The innumerable varieties of seals and similar objects that have been unearthed in various parts of Northern India and that can be dated from the third or fourth millenium B.C. to the late Gupta period and afterwards contain numerous figures, many of which have been assumed with a great deal of justification to stand for various divinities in their anthropomorphic, theriomorphic and sometimes therio-anthropomorphic forms. On many seals of the Kushan and the Gupta periods, most of these gods and goddesses as also their emblems can be definitely recognised as belonging to one or other of the different religious creeds that were current in the period when they were manufactured. I have already drawn the attention of my readers, in the previous chapter, to the Sirkap bronze seal of Śivarakṣita, that gave me the necessary clue for the identification of Śiva in certain coin-devices of Maues. Mention has also been made by me there of a few other metal and terracotta seals of the Kushan and the Gupta periods, which supply us with characteristic representations of such Hindu gods as Viṣṇu and Śiva, as well as a few of their emblems. I shall presently draw the attention of my readers to a good many seals of the Gupta period (a few amongst them going back to the Kushan age), that were unearthed at such old sites of India as Bhita, Basarh, Rajghat, etc. But before I begin a systematic study of some of these seals and seal-matrices, from the iconographic point of view, it will be necessary for me to refer briefly to the many hundreds of sealings that were discovered in the course of excavations at the pre-historic Indus Valley sites of Mohenjo-

daro and Harappa. Whatever might have been the particular purpose that was served by them, there is little doubt that the figures which very frequently appear on their surface had some connection with the religion that was practised by these pre-historic Indians. The very interesting seal unearthed at Mohenjo-daro, which bears a three-faced horned figure 'seated on a low Indian throne in a typical attitude of *Yoga*, with legs bent double beneath him, heel to heel, and toes turned downwards', has previously been noticed by me. This particular sitting posture clearly corresponds to the Yogic *āsana* known as *kūrmāsana*, where the heels are placed under the gluteals in a manner exactly similar to the mode described above. It will be of interest here to give a fuller account of the device, so carefully studied by Sir John Marshall. The two arms of the figure, which are covered with bangles, are outstretched, and his hands, with thumbs to front, rest on his knees; on his neck and breast is placed a series of necklaces or torques in a manner similar to that of the *graiveyaka* ornament placed on the neck and breast of the Yakṣa figures of the Śuṅga and the post-Śuṅga period; the lower limbs seem to be bare and the figure appears to be ithyphallic; his head is crowned by a pair of horns meeting in a tall head-dress. To either side of the god are four animals, an elephant and a tiger on his proper right, a rhinoceros and a buffalo on his left. Beneath the throne are two deer standing with heads regardant and horns turned to the centre. Just below the trunk of the elephant on the top left corner and above the tiger is the crude outline of a human figure (Pl. VII, fig. 1). Marshall is justifiably sure about the divine character of the figure, and from its peculiarly distinctive attributes, such as three faces, the Yogic *āsana*, its association with animals, as many as five or six in number, its deer-throne and its horns, he concludes that the figure is a prototype of the historic Śiva-Paśupati.[1] The seal just

[1] Marshall, *M.I.C.*, Vol. I, pp. 52-6, pl. XII, 17. We miss, in the assembly of animals by the side of the god, Śiva's bull Nandī. Marshall has very rightly referred to the association of deer with the historic Śiva. As regards the horns, there is no need to assume that they 'took the form of the *triśūla* or trident in later

noticed at length is the same as No. 420 in Mackay's list of seals discovered by him at Mohenjo-daro. Two other seals (Nos. 222 and 235) in the same list, contain different representations of apparently the same deity, though many of the details of Mackay's No. 420 are omitted. The figure on seal No. 235 bears only one face, and the head, adorned with a pig-tail hanging down on one side, is shown in profile. The head-dresses of the figures in these two seals (Nos. 222 and 235) are very simliar, ' but surmounted by a plant motif with three branches in the one case and only a single branch on the other.' Mackay remarks about this head-dress, 'The larger figure on seal 420 lacks this spray of foliage, but has instead the fan-shaped ornament commonly associated with the pottery female figurines.' [1]

Marshall refers to two seals found at Mohenjo-daro, which contain figures of a god seated in *yoga* posture, on whose either side kneels a half-human half-animal form of a

days, and in that guise continued to be a special attribute of Śiva '; for the horns as such were also associated with Śiva, as is evident not only from the epic passage which reads : *Svargāduttuṅgamamalaṃ viṣāṇaṃ yatra śūlinaḥ* | *Svamātmavihitaṃ dṛṣṭvā marttyaḥ śivapuraṃ vrajet* (*Mahābhārata, Vanaparva*, ch. 88, v. 8), but also from the fact that the horn as an instrument of music is very often placed in one of the hands of the popular representations of Śiva in Bengal. Hopkins thinks that the horn in the epic passage just quoted may refer to the crest of the image o' Śiva (*Epic Mythology*, p. 73).

Saletore attempted to identify the figure as Agni, in *New Review*, 55, X, 1939; but his grounds of objection to Marshall's view were refuted by Moraes in a subsequent issue of the same journal. In one of the issues of *J.R.A.S.B.*, the problem of the identity of the figure has been thoroughly discussed from the ethnological point of view by A. Aiyappan who has fully endorsed Marshall's identification (Letters, Vol. V, pp. 401-06).

[1] Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-daro*, Vol. I, p. 335; Vol. II, Pl. LXXXVII, figs. 222 and 235, and Pl. XCIV, fig. 420. Mackay is not sure whether there are horns on the head of the figures on seals Nos. 420 and 222; with regard to the latter, he says, ' The horns, if indeed they are horns, are definitely separate from the head; they are, moreover, represented as fastened to the base of the twig.' What has been described as a probable *ūrdhvaliṅga* feature of the figure on No. 420 is absent on the figures on the two other seals, where they appear to be wearing a very short piece of loin-cloth comparable, according to Mackay, with *lyaṅgot* (*kaupīna*?), so frequently worn by yogis and sannyāsis of India.

A. Aiyappan has made some useful suggestions with regard to the horned head-dress in *J.R.A.S.B.*, Letters, Vol. V, pp. 401-6.

Nāga with hands uplifted in prayer (*M.I.C.*, Vol. III, CXVI, 29 and CXVIII, 11). It is not quite clear, however, from these two seal devices whether the snake-body is attached to the back of the kneeling human votaries of the god; in the early Kushan and subsequent representations of the Nāgas at Mathura and other sites, the whole serpent-body and sometimes only its one or many hoods (five or seven) are invariably attached behind the human body (the latter mode is also adopted in the Śuṅga art of Central India). But on these seals, the technique of showing the Nāgas might have been somewhat similar to the one followed by the Bharhut artist in his presentation of the scene of Elāpatra Nāgarāja's visit to the Buddha; at first Elāpatra is shown in his serpent form, then he is given the human shape with the snake hoods attached behind his head. On these Indus-valley seals, the snakes appear on the far sides while the kneeling human figurines, without any snake hood, on the near sides of the god.

Several other composite figures of a more complex form are also found on these seals; human-faced goat or ram, part bull, and part elephant with human countenance,—all these are figured on seals Nos. 378, 380 and 381 (*M.I.C.*, Vol. I, p. 66). These curious composite forms, so clearly reminiscent of the Pramathas or Gaṇas, the attendants of Śiva, of subsequent days, are apparently also represented in the stone images in the round, illustrated in *M.I.C.*, Vol. III, Pl. C, 7 and 9. Marshall remarks, ' Such stone images can hardly have been other than cult objects intended for worship; on the other hand, the seals, like most of the seals found at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa were almost certainly amulets which were used by the votaries of this curious syncretic form of deity ' (*Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 66-7). *Mackay's* excavations at Mahenjo-daro brought to light a few more seals with the composite animal figures. The beast on his seals numbering 24 and 494 represents 'a combination of the usual urus-like animal with two other heads, those of an antelope and a short-horned bull.' A possible explanation suggested by him about this unusual device is that 'its owner

may have sought the protection or assistance of three separate deities represented by the heads of these three animals.'[1] The same archaeologist also records the discovery of four seals numbering 411, 450, 521 and 636, from the lower levels, having the curious human-faced composite animal similar to that on Marshall's seals numbering 378, 380 and 381, already noticed by me. In this figure, there is a fusion of as many as three, or possibly four, animals,—forelegs of an ox-like animal, the striped hind-quarters and feet of a tiger, short curved horns of a bull or an antelope and the lolling trunk of an elephant and its pair of tusks. Mackay observes that this composite figure perhaps represented a deity that was worshipped at Mohenjo-daro; he is also inclined to think that 'it was perhaps also portrayed in statue form, as the representation of it on the seals shows it to be wearing garlands with which it is likely that its images were adorned.' These chimaera-like creatures distinctly remind us of the human-faced winged bulls and griffins of the early Buddhist art of Central India, whose prototypes have been sought by Grünwedel and others in the similar creatures of imagination portrayed in the early art of Western Asia. I may, however, draw the attention of my readers to one very significant observation of Mackay, in this connection: 'Composite animals are, of course, well-known in ancient art in other parts of the world; they are supposed to have been invented, if we may thus term it, in Sumer and Elam, whence came the later "beast art" of Europe. It is not outside the bounds of possibility that the conception of a composite animal originated in India and spread from there gradually to the west by the land route.'[2] Reference may be made here to the terracotta sealing (No. 2409), a three-sided tapering prism, unearthed from mound F at Harappa. Each of its three faces contains a standing mythical figure,

1 Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-daro*, Vol. I, p. 333.

2 Mackay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 333; Vol. II, Pls. LXXXIII, XCIV, XCV, XCVI, XCVIII. 'These composite animals appear only on the seals of the earlier occupations,' as is evident from the fact that the latter are found only in the lower level, but the fact of their not being found in the upper strata should not be stressed too far. For such composite animals, see Pl. VIII, Figs. 1-3.

but the one on the left face is very interesting, it being human above the waist and bovine below. The figures on the right and middle faces also seem to be human above and animal below (Vats, *Excavations at Harappa*, Vol. I, p. 44; Pl. VIII, Fig. 1). I have already mentioned the name of the Gaṇas and the Pramathas, while referring to the human-faced animal forms. The Garuḍas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Kumbhāṇḍas and others of the epic and Purāṇic literature and ancient and mediaeval Indian art of the historic period should also be considered in this connection. The base of some of the above is undoubtedly Vedic in character (Garuḍa-Garutman, sun conceived as a bird in the *Ṛgveda*); but who can doubt that these creatures of imagination owed much for their origin and evolution to the dim memories of the remote past in the minds of the Indians of the age of the *Mahābhārata* and of the Purāṇas?

Some of these seals also contain elaborate representations of scenes which seem to illustrate mythological stories current among the pre-historic people of this region. These seal devices can very well be compared with the iconographic presentation of various myths associated with different religious creeds of India in the subsequent period. A reference to a few such seal devices will not be out of place here. Vats describes a triangular prism sealing of terracotta with a blurred legendary scene on each side. One face of this seal shows a god in a standing posture; his right arm is profusely decorated, but the left one is indistinct. Its second face shows a tall stalwart man engaged in fighting a bison which has been firmly caught by the horns. Vats observes, 'The scene may be a representation of Ea-bani fighting a bison in a jungle.' The third face shows to left a human figure, most presumably a deity, seated in a typical attitude of *Yoga* with another figure to right seated on its haunches.[1] The same author fully describes an oblong terracotta sealing which contains legendary scenes on both its faces; the

1 *Excavations at Harappa*, Vol. I, p. 129; Vol. II, Pl. XCIII, 310. The tentative explanation of the scene depicted on the first face may be correct; but the scene depicted on the third face is undoubtedly Indian in nature.

order of depiction on each face probably runs from left to right. It is so very interesting for the purpose of our present study that I cannot but fully note his description of the devices on both the sides. The obverse shows first of all a man attacking a tiger from a *māchān* (scaffolding) erected on an acacia tree. The deity is next shown seated on a low Indian throne in the well-known Yogic posture; from behind his head-dress there is a long tassel-like appendage to right, which reminds us of a similar object on the head of a similar figure on some Mohenjo-daro seals described by Mackay (*cf.* Nos. 222 and 235 already noted by me). Of the animals to his right, the one in the enclosure may be a goat, that below the projection, a hare or kid, and that above it, an indistinct animal with a long body. The reverse side of it shows from left to right a humpless bull standing by a trident-headed post, with his head bent down a little, then a standing figure, possibly a god, in front of a two-storied structure, followed by three pictograms at the right end. The structure seems to be of wood and is of unusual interest. It ' looks like a combined side elevation and perspective of a double-storied room preceded by a porch—both of open work in front, but seemingly the two-storied room is closed by lattice-work on the rear side and crowned at the corners by somewhat conical finials.' It is not certain what the bifurcated object apparently hanging down from a projection in front of the terrace stands for; just below it, however, is placed a domical something over the porch. Vats remarks, " The structure is probably of a sacred character, and in view of the trident post and bull, which are peculiarly associated with Śiva whose prototype has been found at Mohenjo-daro, the possibility of the standing figure being ultimately identified as another form of the same god may not be ruled out."[1] The scene of what appears to be a tiger-hunt is comparatively familiar in

[1] M. S. Vats, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-30, Pl. XCIII, 303. Both these terracotta seals were discovered in Mound F, belonging to Stratum No. III.

Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. Marshall suggests that ' such seals may have been used as protective amulets against tigers or other jungle animals ' (*M.I.C.*, Vol. I, p. 71). This explanation holds good as regards the obverse device, but the reverse one partially reminds me of the reverse device of certain Ujjayinī coins, which I have reproduced in Pl. I, fig. 15; the animals are no doubt absent, but here too is some sort of a structure with conical projections (?), as well as a trident-headed post which, however, is held by the right hand of the standing figure on the right side (in the previous chapter, I have suggested the possibility of this figure representing the votary; it may as well be the cult deity in his human form). As regards ' the domical object over the porch ' on the Harappa seal, it might be the same as the realistic phallus which appears on the obverse of the same types of coins (*cf.* Pl. I, fig. 14). It may be noted *in passim*, that the figure standing by the humpless bull on the Harappa seal seems to hold a long staff in his left hand and a water-vessel-like object in his right one, just reminiscent of similar figures on certain punch-marked coins, which I have tentatively identified as Śiva in the previous chapter (*cf.* Pl. I, fig. 4). The devices on the two seals, Nos. 279 and 510 of Mackay's book, are of great interest for our study. The former depicts a buffalo with its head so represented as to show both the rugged horns, below which is placed an apparently partitioned feeding-trough; in the extreme left corner is shown a man with his foot upon the buffalo's nose, grasping a horn with one hand and with the other about to thrust a spear with a barbed point into the animal's back; there was a pictogram on the top right, only one letter being preserved, the others being broken off. The same scene also appears on two other sealings unearthed at Mohenjo-daro. Mackay remarks, with a great deal of diffidence, that this scene ' may represent a belief not unlike the legend of Dundubhi, the buffalo demon, whom Śiva and other gods attacked with tridents; though their weapons proved powerless against the animal, they eventually killed

it by means of incantations.' [1] The parallelism noticed by Mackay is no doubt very interesting ; I remember one passage of the *Durgā-saptaśatī*, which, while describing the fight between the goddess Durgā and the evil incarnate in the shape of the buffalo-demon, says, '*sāruḍhā tam mahāsuram pādenākramya kaṇṭhe ca śūlenainamatāḍayat*,' *i.e.*, '(the goddess jumped) to climb upon the great demon, attacked him with her leg and struck at his neck with her *śūla*' (it may be a trident or a barbed spear). The Purāṇic description of this fight may also be a close parallel, but the human figure in Mohenjo-daro seals seems to be a male one and the different forms of plastic representations of Durgā as *Mahiṣamarddinī* have very little similarity to the scene on the Indus seals just described. Mackay's seal No. 510 shows a buffalo which seems to have attacked a number of people who are lying on the ground in every conceivable position. Without excluding the possibility of its depicting 'an episode that actually occurred to some of the inhabitants of Mohenjo-daro,' Mackay observes, 'we may perhaps see in this scene a god, or the emblem of a god, attacking his enemies, a parallel to the well-known scene on the slate palettes of the First Dynasty of Egypt, where the king himself in his character of a " Strong Bull " gores a prostrate enemy.' [2]

It is time now to refer to a few more early Indus Valley seals and incidentally to other objects of a somewhat similar nature, that seem to prove the existence of the Mother-goddess cult among the people of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. Marshall has observed that though there is no direct proof about the existence of Śaktism in this region, yet there is enough indirect evidence in the shape of

[1] Mackay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 336; Vol. II, Pl. LXXXVIII, fig. 279, Pls. XCI, 4*a*, XCII, 11*b*. He quotes, as his authority for the Dundubhi legend, Oppert's *Oriental* (evidently a misprint for *Origina!*) *Inhabitants of India*, pp. 473-74. In the 9th chapter of the Avantīkṣetramāhātmyam of the Āvantya-Khaṇḍam of the *Skandapurāṇa*, we find the story of the buffalo-demon named Hālāhala being killed by the Gaṇas of Śiva as well as the other gods assembled in the Rudrakṣetra near Avantī.

[2] Mackay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 336 7; Vol. II, plate XCVI, fig. 510.

phalli, baetylic stones and ring-stones. The same author drew the attention of scholars to numbers of female figurines of terracotta, etc., that were discovered not only in this part of India but also in Baluchistan, though the ones discovered in the latter place differ from those of the Indus Valley in that they are not full-length images.[1] The great majority of these female figurines appear as 'a standing and almost nude female, wearing a band or girdle about her loins, with elaborate head-dress and collar, and occasionally with ornamental cheek cones and a long necklace.' Mackay remarks (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 265), 'In fact, what are generally regarded as images of an Earth or Mother-goddess are practically always nude, save for quantities of jewellery, a wide girdle and their remarkable head-dresses.' Now, an oblong terracotta seal with scenes depicted on both sides, that was unearthed at Harappa, most probably contains a representation of the same goddess with some additional traits. The right side of the obverse face is occupied by a nude female figure shown upside down with legs wide apart, and 'with a plant issuing from her womb ; her arms are shown in the same position in which those of the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati are shown ; at her left side are shown a pair of tigers standing facing each other (these are regarded by Marshall as two genii, animal ministrants of the deity). The left part of the reverse side of this seal contains two human figures, one male and the other female ; the latter seated, with her hair dishevelled, raises her hands in supplication to the male who stands in front of her in a threatening attitude with a shield-like thing and a sickle-shaped object in his left and right hands respectively. Marshall suggests that the ' scene is intended to portray a human sacrifice connected with the Earth Goddess depicted on the other side, with whom we must also associate the two genii.' This striking and unique representation of

[1] Marshall, *M.I.C.*, Vol. I, p. 48 ff. Marshall refers to the wide belt of the ancient world from the Indus to the Nile, in which these figurines have been found ; he is sure that they are ' effigies of the great Mother-Goddess or of one or other of her local manifestations.'

the goddess with a plant issuing from her womb is compared by Marshall with a terracotta relief of the early Gupta age from Bhita on which the goddess is shown with her legs in much the same position, but with a lotus issuing from her neck instead of from her womb.[1] One of the most interesting seals bearing the representation of a goddess, this time a tree-goddess or spirit, was discovered at Mohenjo-daro. The tree, an *aśvattha* as recognisable from its leaves shown on the top right corner, is represented by its two branches only springing from a circle on the ground ; between the two branches stands the nude deity having long hair, a pair of horns with probably a spring of foliage in between, or *triśūla* horns, and armlets; in front of the tree appears a half-kneeling worshipper, also with long hair, armlets and horns (between a pair of these horns a leaf-spray or plume is recognisable), behind whom stands a goat with human face ; in the register below are seven ministrants or votaries, each dressed in short kilt and wearing long pig tails with a spray of leaves or a feather in the hair ; beyond the foot of the tree on the right is a square partitioned receptacle very similar in conception to the pottery dishes found in Mohenjo-daro (Pl. VII, Fig. 2). Marshall is of opinion that the whole scene represents the epiphany of the tree-goddess, taking the composite human-headed animal figure as a protecting local divinity of a minor type accompanying the suppliant into the presence of the tree-goddess.[2]

Though the objects now to be noted by me do not really fall in with the category of sealings, still I feel a brief

[1] Marshall, *M. I. C.*, Vol. I, p. 52, pl. XII, fig. 12. M. S. Vats, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 42, Vol. II, pl. XCIII, 304. Marshall, after comparing the two animal " genii " on this sealing with those hailing from the Aegean area and Mesopotamia, remarks : ' That the conception of these animal genii arose independently in Greece, Mesopotamia and India is hardly conceivable, but whether it originated in the East or West has yet to be determined.'

[2] Marshall, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 63-5, pl. XII, fig. 18. Mackay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 337-8; Vol. II, pl. XCIV, fig. 430, pl. XCIX, A. The goddess standing between the branches of the tree is reminiscent of one of the variants of the goddess Lakṣmī, in which she is made to stand on the pericarp of a lotus flower, with lotus flowers and leaves on long stalks spreading on her either side; *cf. H. I. I. A.*, pl. XIV, fig. 52.

reference to them will be of some use to us in our present study. A large number of ring-stones, ranging from half an inch to nearly four feet in diameter, have been found in the course of excavations at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa ; the larger ones are made of stone, while the smaller ones are of different materials such as stone, faience, shell, or imitation carnelian. ' The most typical of them have their upper and lower surfaces undulating ; in others, the lower surface is flat, and the top takes a quatrefoil form ' (Marshall). Two explanations were suggested by scholars with regard to the nature of these objects ; according to some, the larger ones of them served as architectural members, while according to others they were stone money. But Marshall has raised very reasonable objections to both these suggestions, and his original interpretation that these are to be regarded as representations of *yoni*, the female organ of generation, as symbolising motherhood and fertility still appears to be the correct one. When they are compared to the numbers of phalli—they are so realistic that they cannot be explained in any other way (*cf.* the realism manifest in the earliest stone phalli of the historic period discovered at Guḍimallam, Mathura and other places)—that have been discovered in the same region, there remains very little doubt about the truth of Marshall's explanation. But it must be borne in mind that in the Indus Valley both the phalli and the *yoni* stones appear to have served the purpose of cult objects separately, as seems to have also been the case with the early phalli and the *yoni* stones of subsequent days. In fact, the *liṅgam* in *arghya* (or *yoni*) design is comparatively late in appearance and even then in the conventional Śivaliṅgas the spout-like projection, from which the *pūjābhāga* of the Śivaliṅga rises upward and which is taken by the uninitiated as symbolising *yoni*, is really a *praṇālī* or drain for the easy outflow of the volume of water usually poured on the top of the emblem by the numerous devotees of the god.[1] These phalli and the ring

[1] The elaborate pedestal, however, in the conventional Śivaliṅgas of the subsequent period were definitely regarded as illustrating the female principle as the

stones thus appear to have separately symbolised the principles of virility and fecundity, both of which are highly esteemed by all men in all ages. Marshall has referred to his own discovery of several curious stone discs, three of which were unearthed from the Bhir Mound at Taxila, one from inside the structures uncovered near the foot of Hathial (Taxila), and one at Kosam. The Hathial one is described by Marshall, thus: 'It is of polished sandstone $3\frac{1}{4}''$ in diameter, adorned on the upper surface with concentric bands of cross and cable patterns and with four nude female figures alternating with honey-suckle designs engraved in relief around the central hole' (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1927-28, P. 66, Pl. XX, Fig. 7). It will be of interest now to compare witn the above Taxila discs a partially broken reddish steatite circular disc, about $2\frac{1}{2}''$ in diameter, found at Rajghat, which contains on the outer side of its top surface a very wellcarved decorative design. The decoration consists of a palm tree with a horse by its side, beyond which is a female figure holding a bird in her outstretched right hand (there is an indistinct object beneath her right hand and a taurine symbol near her left shoulder); then follow in successive orders—a long-eared and short-tailed animal, a crane, the goddess again with her hands this time stretched downwards, some object which is broken, a second palm-tree, a bird, a small circular disc, the goddess again with the circular disc near her left shoulder, then a winged mythical animal and lastly a crane with a crab-like object near its legs. The goddess is thrice repeated with the various accessory figures noted above in between her three representations. But one thing to be noted here is that, unlike the Taxila disc just described, the device appears here on the top surface instead of on the side of the central depression of the disc, and the hole is not there; the surface near the central hole of this one is filled with a beautiful scroll design. The carving is so very beautifully executed

iconographic texts of a comparatively late date, as well as many late Sanskrit works, prove. It must be noted, however, that these elaborate pedestals are usually absent in the phallic emblems of an earlier date.

on this piece in the collection of the Bharat Kala Bhavan Museum, that it can justifiably be assigned to the same age to which the Taxila, Kosam and other discs belong. The same Museum has in its collection another fragment of a red steatite disc unearthed in course of excavations at Rajghat near Banaras, which is more similar to the Taxila disc. This has a hole through the centre, around which as in the Taxila ones are engraved two nude female figures with their hands stretched downwards with probably a honey-suckle in between them; on the flat surface of the disc between cable designs are two monkey-like animals holding a creeper(?) with a lizard (or an alligator) in between them; there is a partially defaced inscription in early Brāhmī script on its rim, which is illegible. Another partly broken similar disc hailing from Kosam, which was acquired by the aforesaid Museum at Banaras, contains a much damaged though partially legible inscription in Aśokan Brāhmī. The inscription reads,.....*ma ṃ tha ṃ ka bhā dā ma tha lo ga tara śa a ga la*(?) *na*(*ni*?) *ka ye la ṃ ca le*.....; it is unfortunate that no sense can be made of it. The ring-stone has two bands of decoration cut in relief on one face around the hole. On one band can be seen a row of alligators below a twisted rope, and on the second band which extends into the hole are carved the nude goddesses between three-pronged trees. The inscription noted above appears on the side of the disc. All the above discs can justifiably be regarded as cult objects comparable with the pre-historic ring stones of the Indus Valley on the one hand and the *cakras* and the *yantras* of the Śāktas, the *Viṣṇupaṭṭas* of the Vaiṣṇavas and the *āyāgapaṭas* of the Jainas on the other. But their ideological association with the former, *viz.*, the *cakras* and the *yantras* of the latter-day Śākta cult, appears to be closer.[1] Marshall observes

[1] Rai Shahib Krishnadas, the Curator of the Museum, kindly gave me permission to utilise the stone-discs in the collection of the Bharat Kala Bhavan for my book. I may here refer to one cylindrical amulet-like object of red steatite about $1\frac{1}{4}''$ in length and $\frac{1}{2}''$ in breadth, found at Rajghat, which is somewhat similar to a few cylindrical seals (amulets?) unearthed at Mohenjo-daro. There are three shallow incuse bands, two on either side and one in the middle, the latter dividing

about the Taxila discs, ' In these ring-stones, which are quite small and used perhaps as *ex voto* offerings, nude figures of a goddess of fertility are significantly engraved with consummate skill and care inside the central hole, thus indicating in a manner that can hardly be mistaken the connection between them and the female principle." The association of the mother-goddess of some of these discs with alligator or alligators is also of unique importance and interest from the point of view of the developed Śakti cult in India. In mediaeval Pārvatī images of Bengal, an alligator (or iguana, *godhā*) is almost invariably shown on the pedestal. *Godhā* plays a prominent part in the mythology of the goddess Caṇḍī and Kālaketu in the mediaeval *maṅgalakāvyas* of Bengal. The animal is also found in many Umā-Maheśvara reliefs of southern India. One of the earliest reliefs in which a *godhā* is shown stretched in two hands of the twelve-armed goddess Mahiṣamarddinī is carved on the 'Chandragupta cave' facade at Udayagiri (Bhilsa, Madhya Bharat) can be difinitely dated in the first or second year of the fifth century A.D. These details fully prove that the moorings of the Śakti cult in India go back to many centuries before the Christian era. Mention may be made in this connection of the twenty-one stone-discs that were accidentally discovered from a deep drain in May, 1951, in Murtaziganj Mahalla of the Patna City (a section of ancient Pātaliputra). They are of soapstone, and the carvings on many of them are of a very high order; their date probably falls in the Śuṅga period. Five of them contain the figures of the nude mother or the fertility goddesses associated with various animals and birds like lion (some of them are winged), elephant, horse, antelope, stag, ram, goose, peacock and

the small cylinder in two fairly equal sections; in one of them are found, in order, a taurine, a long-eared and short-tailed animal, a two-humped camel and a lion, while the other section bears in succession a taurine, a horse, the long-eared and short-tailed animal and an elephant.

[1] *M.I.C.*, Vol. I, pp. 62-3. In the f.n. No. 1 on page 63, he says, ' That ring-stones of this type had a wide vogue in ancient India is shown by the discovery of another specimen at Sahet-Mahet (ancient Śrāvastī) in the U.P., and by the fact that they were copied by the Buddhists, though with this difference that the nude figures of the goddess were eliminated.'

parrot. In this strange medley of animals no alligator or iguana is seen, it is true, but the association of lion and other animals and that of the birds with the goddesses is very significant. Profuse plant and vegetation designs, like those of lotus flower, palmyra, date-palm, etc., cluster round the goddess or goddesses, and they may emphasise the vegetation aspect of the deity so prominent in the Purāṇic concept and worship of the goddess Durgā, the divine Mother. They must have been used as cult objects, and did not merely 'serve the purpose of decorating walls or doors' as suggested by Shere, and they fall in line with the other stone discs and rings recovered from various sites of India, Indus Valley onwards. A ring-stone similar to the Taxila ring-stone, but with a Mauryan Brāhmī inscription *viśākha* (Patna Museum Archæological Exhibit No. 8814) was wrongly described by Jayaswal as a toy-wheel; it has, however, no animal, plant or human figures, but has some decorative and geometrical designs in several rows round the central hole. It should be noted incidentally that these cult objects of the historical period were recovered mostly from historical sites such as Taxila, Kosam (Kauśāmbī), Mathura, Banaras (Rajghat) and Patna (for an objective description of the Patna stone discs and ring, *cf. J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. XXXVII (1951), pp. 178 ff. and plates; see also Pl. XII, Figs. 1-5).

The pre-historic people of the Indus Valley appear to have been great believers in animism also, as is proved by a good many seals discovered at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. The worship of trees or the tree-spirits is the characteristic manifestation of animistic belief. I have already referred to a seal which seems to unite in its device the worship of the female principle as well as that of the tree-spirit, where the epiphany of the female deity in the tree is portrayed in a half realistic, half conventional manner. Many seals in the Indus Valley sites show the presence of two different forms of tree-worship among the people of the locality: ' One in which the tree itself is worshipped in its natural form, the other in which the tree spirit is personified and endowed with human shape and human

attributes.' On several sealings of the Indus region (*M.I.C.*, Vol. I, Pl. XII, Figs. 16, 20, 21, 25, 26), various sacred trees are represented which the artists have attempted to differentiate one from another. A few of these trees appear to be like those enclosed by walls or railings commonly surrounding the base of the sacred trees (*vṛkṣacaityas*) depicted in the later reliefs of the historic period. In the fourth chapter of this book, I have drawn the attention of my readers to one of the commonest devices on the early indigenous coins of India, which is ' tree within railing.' These enclosed trees on the Indus seals can very well be compared with the above and can justifiably be taken as distant prototypes of the *vṛkṣacaityas* and the *sthalavṛkṣas* represented by the latter. The terracotta seal (No. 2410) found at Harappa has as its obverse device ' a deity wearing a kilt or short tunic and a three-pointed head-dress (or *triśūla* horns?), standing under an ornamental arch, which appears to be made of the bent bough of a pipal tree. The lower ends of this bough are rounded up to form loops, each enclosing a star. The head of the deity is turned a little towards the right and on both arms he wears a number of armlets ' (Vats, *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 43-4). The device on one of the sides of a three-sided terracotta prism discovered at Mohenjo-daro, can be described thus: On the extreme right a horned figure with arms adorned with bracelets, standing between two pipal trees; on its left, a sacred goat decorated with garlands, recalling the scene explained by Marshall as the epiphany of the tree-goddess; beyond it a kneeling horned deity, apparently a goddess (*cf.* the long pig-tail), holding out her hands, a small offering table with something like a bird on it being shown on the extreme left (Mackay, *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 351; Vol. II, Pl. LXXXII, Nos. 1-c and 2-c). It is no doubt impossible for us at the present state of our knowledge to be sure about the exact significance of this scene, but we shall not be far wrong if we find in it also the representation of a mythology associated with a tree-spirit. The scene on an amulet noticed by Mackay (*ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 355, Pl. XC, 23-b) may be

referred to in this connection. Two men are shown, each carrying a tree, torn from the ground, with their roots clearly visible; perhaps, the men are about to transplant the trees for the abode of a spirit who is depicted in between the tree-carrying figures; the leafy nature of the arm of this spirit really represents the armlets of the divinity. Mackay has cited an interesting parallel to this scene in that of the Purāṇic story of the Yamalārjuna trees which were uprooted by the child Kṛṣṇa, thereby releasing the two spirits confined in them. We find its iconographic presentation in reliefs of the late Gupta period and afterwards, and it has been suggested by Mackay that it owed its origin to a similar myth of a much earlier date.[1]

The above survey of a few representative seals of the Indus Valley has partially acquainted us with the nature of the beliefs and practices of the pre-historic people of India in that region. Several conclusions have been drawn about the iconographic presentation of some of their gods and goddesses after a careful study of the devices appearing on the seals and amulets; the nature of these conclusions, however, is still a tentative one to a certain extent. As I have said in the second chapter, the unravelling of the mystery of the script and language of the seals, if it is ever unravelled at all, will shed more definite light on the problem.[2] Marshall makes the interesting remark about the representation of the Indus Valley divinities of the remote past that ' the people of Mohenjo-daro had not only reached the stage of anthropomorphising their deities, but were worshipping them in that form as well as in the aniconic'; for, the highly convention-

[1] The two *Arjuna* trees were really the two sons of the Yakṣa king Kubera, *viz.*, Maṇigrīva and Nala-Kubera, who were cursed by Nārada to be changed into trees. Kṛṣṇa released them from this accursed existence by uprooting the trees. The scene on the Mohenjo-daro amulet is somewhat different from its purāṇic counterpart, inasmuch as, in the former, two persons instead of one are shown with the uprooted trees in their hands.

[2] In the second chapter of the first edition, I had hesitated to endorse fully the conclusions of Marshall, Mackay and Chanda. But I subsequently went to Harappa and studied the seals and other antiquities on the spot. I could then accept many of their findings.

served by these seals : some were attached with a string to letter tablets ; others were royal, official or mercantile guild tokens meant for the use of their servants and followers ; a few of them again were undoubtedly manufactured for the use of the heads of religious establishments and their retainers, and a vast number were also the sealings of private individuals. It has been suggested that as a large number of such seals (over 700) were discovered in one single spot at Basarh, it is likely that the seal matrices were manufactured there ; so many impressions—sometimes double, triple, and multiple—on a single lump of clay denoted that the former were being tested in that way. The finished seals were usually made of clay, perhaps prepared according to one of the processes to be mentioned in connection with the manufacture of terracotta images in the next chapter. Most of them were burnt after they had received the impressions from the particular seal matrices, some being very lightly burnt, while a few others were merely sun-burnt. Many of the above varieties of seals bear the figures of several Brahmanical gods and their emblems, the former being fewer in comparison with the latter. Sometimes, only the name of the cult-deity accompanied with some auspicious symbol is engraved, without any impression of his iconic figure or emblem, while at other times different emblems in varieties of combinations make their appearance. In many cases, there is a characteristic connection between the name of the issuer and the deity or his emblem or emblems reproduced on the seals, as we find on some coins of the Pañcāla series. One thing, however, is quite evident from our study of representative specimens from Bhita and Basarh, *viz.*, that even when the Brahmanical cult-gods were being iconically represented, they were comparatively infrequently used in the terracotta seals, where copious use was made of the varieties of their emblems. Again, it is highly probable that an emblem which, in its association with others, would belong to one particular cult, may, when depicted singly, be connected with another. Thus the conch-shell with wheel and other emblems is undoubtedly

Vaiṣṇava in character, but when appearing alone may sometimes denote the *śaṅkhanidhi* of Kubera, a very appropriate symbol for merchant guilds and bankers.

Śiva and his emblems are found depicted on the seals in various ways. I have already referred to the representation of him in his *liṅga* form between two trees with the legend ' *pādapeśvara* ' in the field in Gupta characters, which I found in the collection of Dhir Sing Nahar of Calcutta. A pointed oval seal was discovered by T. Bloch at Basarh, which bears on it a Śivaliṅga with a trident-battle-axe symbol (Bloch simply says *triśūla*, but the combined *triśūla-paraśu* is quite clear from his plate), the legend in exergue below being *Āmrātakeśvara*, meaning the lord of Āmrātaka (Pl. X, Fig. 9). Now Āmrātaka is the name of a mountain ; Bloch draws our attention to the eight Guhya *liṅgas* mentioned in the *Matsyapurāṇa, viz.*, Hariścandra, Āmrātakeśvara, Jaleśvara, Śrīparvata, Mahālaya, Kṛmicaṇḍeśvara, Kedāra and Mahābhairava, which, according to him, were situated in Avimukta, *i.e.*, Banaras (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, p. 110, No. 30, Pl. XL, 2). Bloch remarks about it : ' The letter to which it was attached must have been sent by the custodians of the temple of Āmrātakeśvara' (*Ibid.*, p. 104). The oval seal (No. 39) in the same series (*ibid.*, p. 111) simply bears the legend *Nama Paśupateḥ*. The square seal matrix (No. 574) discovered by D. B. Spooner at the same site (Basarh) in 1913-14, and reproduced by him in the *Annual Report* of the year (Pl. XLIX) bears three symbols on the top section and the legend *Bañjulaka* in early Gupta characters in the lower one, the sections being separated by two closely parallel horizontal lines. Of the three symbols, the middle one is a *triśūla* with a short handle, that on the right ' resembling in shape the early Brāhmī character for *dhu* ' is nothing but a longish water-vessel as seen in the hands of Śiva appearing on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka, and the other on the left ' looking like *ra* ' is but a short staff as is placed in one of the hands of the same deity appearing on some of Huvishka's coins. So, these are nothing but the three attributes usually held by Śiva. A fragmentary sealing or seal

impression of the early Gupta period found by Spooner at Basarh (*ibid.*, pp. 121, 150, Pl. L, No. 672) shows 'a very roughly sketched bullock running to right with the crescent moon above ' (the suggested reading *Māradatta* cannot be supported if one refers to the plate, and I can suggest no other reading as the plate is too indistinct); this is, of course, nothing but Śiva with crescent moon (Śaśāṅkaśekhara) in his theriomorphic form (Nandin). The unique seal impression (*ibid.*, p. 129, No. 84, Pl. XLVI) shows on the upper edge of its slightly concave surface a small conventional *śaṅkha* in outline and a very good humped bull recumbent to left in the middle of the field; the legend is *Rudradevasya*. The former may have no Viṣṇuite association here and may simply stand for the *śaṅkhanidhi*. The humped bull appears on several other seals from Spooner's find at Basarh, the name of the owner, such as Rudrarakṣita, etc., in them (a good many of them are inscribed) showing its cult connection; on some there is a globular object placed between the horns of the animal, which shows, according to some scholars, Sassanian influence. But one very fine large temple seal in Spooner's list (*ibid.*, p. 142, No. 369, with one duplicate, Pl. XLVIII) requires notice here, for it bears five interesting emblems in a row on its top section; Spooner describes them as ' (1) a tall vase with radiating rays or flower-stalks; (2) something that looks like a tall and slender tree, such as a poplar, not that I suppose it is a poplar in reality; (3) the central figure, which has the outline of a stouter tree with spreading base; (4) a battle-axe to left surmounted by a trident; (5) a *kalasa* with rays or flower-stalks.' The legend in Gupta characters reads *Aramikīśvarasya* (*i.e.*, seal of the temple) of Aramikīśvara. The seal is undoubtedly Śaiva in character as the inscription on it shows, and of the five emblems, the trident-axe particularly belongs to this cult; the vase, represented twice, one on each end, in different forms, may stand for *maṅgalaghaṭa* with twigs on both of them—the slender one on the left side may be a variant of an water-vessel which is sometimes placed in the hands of Śiva on Kushan coins; the central device may represent, though in a

schematic way, the somewhat realistic *liṅga* on a wide base, while the one to its immediate proper right is nothing but a *śakti* (spear) with a long flat blade. There is, thus, not much difficulty in defining the five objects, as Spooner thinks; an interesting detail which has been missed by him is that all these five emblems are placed on separate pedestals on ' the ribbon-like horizontal band a little below the true centre,' thus indicating their sacred character. The fine seal No. 764 (*ibid.*, p. 152, Pl. L) contains a device which has been described by Spooner as follows—' a tall female figure standing facing, with the upper part of the body bent considerably to the proper left, left hand on hip; right extended toward the right as in the *varadamudrā*. The figure is seemingly nude, but there are draperies floating to left and right from the level of the waist, and some garland or drapery pendent in front, as though suspended from a girdle around the waist;.....the most curious feature of all is the head-dress which she wears, like a single high horn with streamer floating to the (proper) left.' I had to quote the above description at some length for the correct understanding of the iconography of the figure; the seal is very imperfectly reproduced in the plate, a reference to which will enable us to add some features unnoticed by Spooner and tentatively explain their nature. The left breast of the figure is abnormally large in proportion to the right one, which holds a staff-like object in its right hand; ' the curious head-dress like a single high horn ' is nothing but the longish coil of *jaṭā* shown on the heads of Śiva figures, and it should be noted, it is deliberately placed on one,—*i.e.*, the rightside of the head; lastly, there seem to be traces of the *ūrdhvaliṅga* feature on the front part of the waist. On the basis of these observations of mine, there can be no hesitation about the identity of the figure; it really represents the Ardhanārīśvara aspect of Śiva, in which the left half is that of Umā, and the right that of the god himself. The staff in the right hand, the longish coil of *jaṭā* placed on the right side of the head, the prominence given to the left breast (the right breast is much smaller than the left one and belongs

to a male figure) and the probable *ūrdhvaliṅga* feature—all these support my suggestion. The legend could not be fully read by Spooner and its hazy reproduction does not help us to improve the reading which is...*tipurakṣaṣaṣṭhidattaḥ*. It may be observed here that this is one of the earliest representations of the Ardhanārīśvara aspect of Śiva in art; I have already drawn the attention of my readers to Bardasanes' mention of it. V. S. Agrawala draws our attention to a miniature relief depicting the same theme, which belongs to the Kushan period; it was in the collection of the late Pandit Radhakrishna of Mathura (*J.I.S.O.A.*, 1937, p. 124, Pl. XLIV, 2). The concave impress of a seal (No. 422, *ibid.*, p. 143, Pl. XLVIII) has a battle-axe, with a long handle laid lengthwise of the seal, as its device. The long legend in very small characters is not legible, but seems to end in *dattasya*. The battle-axe is a Śaiva emblem and it is very frequently found in Śiva images of later period (*cf. Paraśumṛgavarābhītihastam*); the Śiva figure of the Guḍimallam *liṅga*, one of the earliest sculptures of Śiva, carries in one of its two hands a battle-axe.

Of the interesting religious seals unearthed by Sir John Marshall at Bhita, a good many show undoubted Śaiva features; not only are yarious Śaiva emblems like the *liṅga*, the trident-axe, the *nandipāda* and the bull (the bull in some instances has a sphere of disc between horns as appearing on Sātavāhana coins) clearly recognisable on them, as well as on the seals of the officials, localities and private individuals, but there appear also human representations of Śiva, though rarely. Some of the religious seals bear the different appellations of Śiva such as Kāleśvara, Kālañjara-bhaṭṭāraka, Bhadreśvara, Maheśvara (?) and Nandī—the last being the name of his mount. One of the oval seals in Marshall's list (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, pp. 47, 49, Pl. XVIII, No. 14) has a trident-axe flanked by a diagram of dots, really a hill symbol, and an unidentified emblem on its left; the legend in eastern Gupta characters is *Kāleśvaraḥ prīyatām* ('May Kāleśvara be pleased'). Marshall observes that Kāleśvara is the name of a Śivaliṅga according to *Skandapurāṇa*, and this tablet

would seem to have been presented as an offering at some shrine of Śiva at Bhita. The seal next in the list is also Śaiva in nature; it bears a realistic Śivaliṅga with an umbrella on one side and a trident on the other. The *liṅga* is placed on a hill in the form of a well-arranged pile of round balls, below which is a waved line probably standing for a river; the legend in northern Gupta characters is *Kālañjara-bhaṭṭārakasya*, *i.e.*, 'of the lord of Kālañjara.' Kālañjara, according to Cunningham, is the name of a hill in Bundelkhand, the favourite resort of Śaiva *tapasvins* from very early times (*A.S.R.*, XXI, p. 20 ff). The manner in which the *Mahābhārata* refers twice to the Śaiva shrines at Kālañjara in its Tīrthayātrā Parvādhyāya of the Vanaparvan definitely proves their importance.[1] This seal was evidently issued from a Śaiva shrine on the Kālañjara hill, though no remains of a temple exist on the hill at present. The seal No. 16 bears also a Śivaliṅga of an extremely realistic nature, placed on a pedestal with the representation of a hill on one side and a trident-axe on the other, having a legend *K(ā)la(ñ)jara* in north-eastern Gupta characters (Pl. XI, Fig. 9). But the next seal—that numbered 17—is of unique iconographic interest; it bears a two-armed male figure seated in *lalitāsana* pose on a *pādapīṭha* with uncertain objects in his hands. There appear to be foliage(?) or flames over head and shoulders; the legend in northern characters of the 4th or 5th century A.D. is *Bhadreśvara* (Pl. XI, Fig. 10). Marshall says that 'this is the name of the Śivaliṅga of Kalpagrāma (not identified up to date) according to the *Vāmanapurāṇa* (Ch. 46). The male figure may, therefore,

[1] Ch. 85, Verses 56-57: *Atra Kālañjaraṃ nāma parvataṃ lokaviśrutam* | *Tatra devahrade snātvā gosahasraphalaṃ labhet* || *Yaḥ snātastarpayet tatra girau Kālañjare nṛpa* | *Svargaloke mahīyeta naro nāstyatra saṃśayaḥ* || Thus the waved line below the hill, evidently the Kālañjara hill, is the river or *devahrada* near it where a dip is specially recommended; *cf.* also Chapter 87, verse 21—*Hiraṇyavinduḥ kathito girau Kālañjare nṛpa*. In the *Matsyapurāṇa* we find mention of Kāliñjaravana as one of the places very much sacred on account of Śiva's presence; *Kāliñjaravanañcaiva śaṅkukarṇaṃ sthaleśvaram* | *Etāni ca pavitrāṇi śaṇṇidhyaddhi mama priye* ||—Ch. 181, V. 27. The Great Epic places the hill somewhere near Prayāga and Citrakūṭa. The Kāliñjaravana of the *Matsyapurāṇa* is evidently the same as Kālañjara of the Epic and of the seals.

be Śiva in the Bhadreśvara aspect.' The figure is unmistakably Śiva and this shows the simultaneous phallic and human mode of representing the divinity. If the reading of the legend on seal No. 23 as *Bhagavato Ma(h)eśvarasya* is correct, Marshall says that it is problematic (*ibid.*, p. 50, Pl. XVIII), then the two-armed male figure standing facing with right hand outstretched and left hand on hip, with folds of drapery falling on both sides, may also represent Śiva. The three Bhita seals numbering 26-28, described by Marshall in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12 (p. 51 and Pl. XVIII), require notice in this connection. The first bears on it a bull standing to left with a crescent under its neck ; a woman stands in front, with her right hand outstretched and left hand on hip ; a post or a thunderbolt appears behind the bull ; bow with arrow and pile of balls (*i.e.*, the symbol for mountain), similar to those in Kolhapur series of the Andhra coins, are shown in exergue. Similar figures are present on the second (No. 27) though in a transposed manner and on the third (28), the latter being much worn. The legend on No. 26 is *Mahārāja Gautamīputrasya Śrī Śivameghasya* in characters of the 2nd-3rd century A.D., while the legend in similar characters on No. 27 is *(Rā)jña Vāsasu (Vāśiṣṭhi) putrasya Śrī Bhīmasena (sya)*. Marshall remarks about the first that 'the bull and crescent point to the king's leaning towards Śaivism ;' the bow and arrow as well as the mountain are also characteristic emblems of Śiva. The female figure on the seals very probably stands for Durgā, the consort of Śiva, her standing posture and the hand-pose closely coinciding with the same on seal No. 23, where we may find the god himself in human form.[1] The Bhita seal No. 44, of an official, showing bull standing facing, with round object between horns, is interesting, because in it the main device is flanked by a wheel in side elevation and ' an uncertain symbol ' (Marshall) ; their sacred character is fully emphasised by the

[1] The king Śivamegha of the Bhita seal seems to be identical with the one mentioned in inscription No. II from Kosam, edited by D. R. Sahni in *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 159-60, and noticed also by Sten Konow in *Ibid.*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 245-8. For the coins of Śivamegha, reference should be made to Motichandra's article on 'A Hoard of Kausambi coins from Fatehpur,' *J.N.S.I.*, II, pp. 95-108.

fact that all three are placed on pedestals. The early Gupta legend in northern characters is *Daṇḍanāyaka-Śrī Śaṅkaradattasya ;* the name of the official is no doubt Śaiva, and so the animal form of Śiva in the centre of his seal is quite appropriate ; but to this sectary, Viṣṇu is also an object of adoration, for his two emblems (we shall see presently that ' the uncertain symbol ' is a Vaiṣṇava one) are allotted honoured, though subordinate, positions in his seal. The devices of particularly Śaiva connection that are to be found on the other seals of officials or of private individuals at Bhita are bull, trident, trident-axe, *nandipāda*, etc.

The unique seals of the late Gupta and the early mediæval period that were discovered at Nalanda contain some figures of Brahmanical deities and their emblems, interesting both from the artistic and the iconographic point of view. It will be possible to notice at some length only some of them in this connection. Nalanda was principally associated with Buddhism, and it is interesting to find so many Brahmanical Hindu deities and their emblems on these seals. But such devices appear mostly on the sealings of royal personages, private officials and village organisations (*grāma* or *grāmika janapada*), the Mahāvihāra seals mostly bearing Buddhist emblems. It proves that the rulers of the land as well as a good many of their subjects living around the famous Buddhist monastery and seat of learning were followers of the Brahmanical creeds. Sometimes seals with Brahmanical deities on them were tested on lumps of clay bearing impressions of monastic seals. Hindu and Buddhist devices thus appearing side by side. A four-armed goddess seated on a lotus seat on the back of a lion, described in the seal legend as *Śrīmad-Dereśrarī* is shown on a sealing (S.I., 305) which bears on another side the name and emblems of the Nalanda monastery. She is most probably Durgā Siṁhavāhinī ; she appears thus on another monastic sealing (S. 9, 75), three of her hands holding a mace (*gadā*), a sword (*khaḍga*) and a lotus stalk, the animal below her looking like a buffalo. Buffalo is the usual mount of Yama, the god of death, as well as that of Vārāhī, one of the Sapta-

Mātṛkās, but here the goddess does not look like her. Another buffalo-riding four-armed Devī appears on a sealing (*S.I.*, 547) with a sword and a wheel (*cakra*) in her upper right and left hands, and a trident (*triśūla*) in her lower right, the object in the lower left being indistinct. She also does not look like Vārāhī, and the emblems held by her hands are indicative of cult amalgam. A fragmentary seal (*S.I.*, 915) has a six-armed goddess riding on a bull, and she may stand for Māheśwarī, a śakti of Śiva and one of the Mātṛkās, the number of hands being unusual. A round burnt red clay sealing (S. 9, R. 92) contains a seated goddess with a noose (*pāśa*), a trident, a lotus bud and a water-vessel (*kamaṇḍalu*) respectively in her four hands from the lower right onwards; the two-line legend is *Brāhmaṇī-grāmajanapadasya* (the legend and at least two of her attributes may partially associate her with Brahmāṇī, another of the Mātṛkās). An eight-armed goddess seated on a lion, presumably the goddess Durgā, appears on an ' elongated oval ' sealing of a *grāma-janapada* (S. 9, R. 19); a wheel, a bow and a trident can be recognised among her emblems. Devices on two seals (S. 9, R. 55 and S. 9, R. 144) with the respective legends *Kāli-grāmakīya-janapada* and *Śrī Nālandā-pratibaddha-Bhūtikā-(grāma.....)...janapadasya* are very interesting from the iconographic point of view. They appear to be four-armed goddesses riding on alligators or iguanas; the association of these animals (*godhā*) has already been noticed by me in some ring-stones of the Maurya period. The device on a seal (S. 9, R. IA.) shows the eight-armed goddess Durgā Siṁhavāhinī with a sword, a lotus, a bell (*ghaṇṭā*), a snake (?), a noose, etc., in her hands, two of them being shown in the ' assurance ' (*abhaya*) and boon-conferring (*varada*) poses. But the most interesting device appears on a seal (S. 9, R. IA) in the form of a skeleton goddess holding in four hands a skull cup (*kapāla*), a sword (?), a scythe (*kartṛ*) and a trident from the lower right onwards; she is seated facing right on a dead body (*pretāsanā*), this feature being unnoticed by Hirananda Sastri. He identifies her as Mahākālī, but her sunken belly (possibly with a scorpion

mark on it not distinguishable from the reproduction), fleshless and haggard look (*nirmāṃsā*), her sitting posture and attributes leave little doubt that she stands for Cāmuṇḍā, one of the most terrific forms of the goddess Durgā (Pl. X, Fig. 11). The aforesaid devices fully prove that Nalanda and its environs were flourishing seats of Śakti worship in the late Gupta and early mediæval periods, when many of the iconographic varieties of the goddess served as objects of worship to the local people.

The other Brahmanical creeds were also followed in the region. A sealing of the Udumbaraka village (legend *Udumbaraka-grāmasya*, S.I., 789) contains a seated Gaṇeśa with four hands holding a rosary (*akṣamālā*), a hatchet (*paraśu*), an elephant goad (*aṅkuśa*) and a dish of sweets (*modakabhāṇḍa*) from the lower right onwards; the elephant head with the trunk applied to the pot of sweetmeat is quite distinct. The lump of clay having two seal impressions (S.I., 645 and 811) has on one of them the two-armed figure of Śiva seated on a flat stool between a tree on the right and a trident on the left, snakes being shown round his head and the trident; the left side of this clay-lump bears the *dharma-cakra* device used on the seals of the *Caturddiśāryya bhikṣusaṃgha* (' the congregation of the monks from four quarters ') at Nalanda. The device on the seal (S.Ia., 442) of the Kālapināka-grāma consists of a four-armed Śiva with a canopy of snake-hoods, flanked by a tree and a lighted lamp on a stand on either side, holding a trident and other objects in his hands. The name of the village Kālapināka, should be noted in this connection; Śiva is Kāla or Mahā-kāla (the ' Time Eternal ') on the one hand and Pinākī (' wielder of the *pināka bow*' on the other) (Pl. X, Fig. 12). The two-armed figure of probably the same deity holding a water-pot and an indistinct object in his hands, also adorned with a canopy of snake-hoods, served as the seal device of Purikā-grāmajanapada (S.I., 374). The figure of a Śiva-liṅga with a crescent on its top and flanked by a female attendant on either side was used as the device of the *adhikaraṇa* ('court of justice ') in the district of the Soṇa-doab (*Śoṇāntarālaviṣaye*

adhikaraṇasya; S.I., 790). There are other divinities and emblems on the seal impressions, and it is not possible to refer to each and everyone of them in detail. It is interesting to note, however, that figures of Viṣṇu are conspicuous by their absence on these sealings, though figures of Gaja-Lakṣmī and Garuḍa can be recognised among the devices.[1]

It will be of interest here to refer to a few terracotta seals of the Gupta and pre-Gupta periods which have been discovered at Rajghat near Banaras, and which contain the representations of some Śaiva emblems.[2] A large Gupta seal impression has a bull to left with a combined trident-axe in front; the legend below reads—*Avimukteśvara-bhaṭṭāraka*. A fragmentary circular seal with the legend *Rājño Abhayasya* in the 1st and 2nd century A.D. Brāhmī script bears a bull to the left with the three-arched symbol (a hill) in front; there appear also traces of a *cakra*, a *śankha* and a *spear*. This shows a combination of Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva emblems. A sealing with the legend *Phalgunimitrasya* in 1st century B.C. Brāhmī script bears a bull standing to left facing a standard (trident?). A circular seal with indistinct legend in Gupta characters bears a Śivaliṅga flanked by a combined trident-axe on left and a double-faced thunderbolt on right. A lenticular sealing with the legend *Yogeśvara* in Gupta script has a serpent device with a trident on one side and a rosary on the other. The circular sealing bearing the legend in early Gupta script, *Śrī devadevasvāmī* (*naḥ*), is of unique interest, for it undoubtedly shows one mode of representing Śiva in human form, the *devadevasvāmī* of the inscription. The god stands facing, on an elaborate pedestal, with outstretched arms holding a wreath (or a noose?) in the right and a flask in the left hand, a serpent being shown to his left. One can compare this variety of Śiva figure with

[1] Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and Its Epigraphic Material*, *M.A.S.I.* No. 66, pp. 37 ff. There are some inaccuracies in Sastri's descriptions, which have been corrected here.

[2] These seals have not all been published and I am much indebted for the notice of mine to the courtesy and kindness of Srī Krishnadas, the Curator of the Banaras Bharat Kalabhavan, and his assistant Sri Vijaykrishna; I studied the seals on the spot and checked the reading of the legends and the description given in the museum records.

the Bhadreśvara one on the Bhita seal noticed above. The device on another seal with legend *Śrī-Avi(mu)kteśvara* in Gupta script can be usefully compared with the large Gupta seal noticed first in this series (one with the legend *Avimukteśvara-bhaṭṭāraka*). Here also, the bull is seated to left, but it is flanked by a trident to the left and a *tridaṇḍī* to the right. A circular seal of black clay shows an *aṅkuśa* (elephant-goad) on a pedestal with the legend *Sauridharmmaḥ* in Gupta characters below. A circular seal has the device of a bull seated to left on pedestal; the legend below in the Brāhmī script of the Śuṅga period reads *Gopasenasa*. Another circular black clay seal impression shows a bull standing to left with a *yūpa* standard in front and a *cakra* standard behind; the legend below is *Nāgārjunasa* in early Kushan Brāhmī script. An oval seal with bull seated to left has the owner's name as *Caṇḍeśvaradāsa* in Gupta characters; it means 'the slave or devotee of Caṇḍeśvara'. Caṇḍeśvara is one of the names of Śiva and is also the name of one of the principal Śivagaṇas (*cf.* the Caṇḍeśānugrahamūrti of Śiva).

As regards Viṣṇu and his emblems in the various terracotta seals, a seal from Basarh, numbered 31, described by T. Bloch in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04 (pp. 110-1, Pl. XL. 3), is highly interesting. Bloch describes it as follows: 'Ornamental *triśūla* in the centre to right staff consisting of seven dots, *śaṅkha* and solar disc; to left symbol for moon and ornamental wheel; horizontal line below which the two-lined legend is (1) *Śrī-Viṣṇupādasvāmī-Nā-* (2) *rāya(ṇa)*', meaning 'Nārāyaṇa, the lord of the illustrious Viṣṇupāda.' Bloch further remarks, 'This looks as if the seal came from the authorities of a temple of Viṣṇupāda, perhaps the famous shrine at Gaya. If I am right, the seal would prove the existence of this temple in the 4th century A.D.' (*ibid.*, p. 104). The seal being thus without doubt a Vaiṣṇava one, the central position given to a Śaiva emblem is queer; but the symbol is certainly not ornamental *triśūla*, but an ornate variant of the much simpler one which is sometimes described as 'nāga' symbol, (*cf.*, figs. 11 and 12 in Pl. II). The Bhita

seal No. 36, as described by Marshall (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, p. 53, Pl. XIX), has symbols of wheel and conch with a variant of the above symbol, named ' uncertain symbol ' by him, between the two; Marshall rightly remarked that the other two symbols being Vaiṣṇava, the intervening one must also be a Vaiṣṇava one, but he was unable to identify it. All these different symbols are originally derived from the so-called Nāga symbol just mentioned, in which D. R. Bhandarkar recognised the *kaustubha maṇi*, the jewel *par excellence*, which adorns the breast of Viṣṇu (*kaustubhamani-bhūṣitoraṣkaḥ* ; *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, v. 31) ; he saw the sign on the breast of the Viṣṇu figure sculptured in the verandah of the cave at Udayagiri, bearing the date 82 (Gupta era) as also on the breast of the Garuḍa which crowned the Besnagar column (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, p. 211). A. K. Coomaraswamy, on the other hand, would identify it as the *śrīvatsa* mark, one of the eight auspicious signs (*aṣṭamaṅgalā*) in Jain literature and art, which is also a Vaiṣṇava symbol (*Ost-Asiatische Zeitschrift*, 1927-28, pp. 183-4). Varāhamihira describes the image of Viṣṇu as *śrīvatsāṅkitavakṣa* and so Coomaraswamy's suggestion is not less likely. In any case, there is no doubt about the Vaiṣṇava character of the symbol and its variants in its present association and we have seen how one form of it appears on the Bhita seal of Śaṅkaradatta. Now the symbol on the Viṣṇupāda temple seal described by Bloch as ' a staff consisting of seven dots ' (Pl. I, Fig. 12) is nothing but the Indian variant of the peculiar club shown in the hands of Śiva on Maues' coin, the biscriptual copper seal of Śivarakṣita, and in one of the hands of the four-armed composite god on the nicolo seal wrongly attributed by Cunningham to Huvishka already described in Chapter IV. This peculiar kind of club (*gadā*) is placed on the back right hand of one four-armed Viṣṇu image of late Kushan or still later period, that was discovered at Taxila (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1935-36, Pl. XIa) ; it is also similar to the handle of a trident placed in the front left hand of a late mediæval image of the Iśāna aspect of Śiva, belonging to the eastern school of Indian sculpture. Thus, though in the early representations,

numismatic as well as sculptural, the emblem in question is associated with Śiva as well as Viṣṇu, yet there is no doubt about its closer association with the latter in later times, though in a changed manner ; in its Viṣṇuite association it is to be described as a variant of *gadā*, while in its Śivaite one, as a form of *daṇḍa*. Now the remaining symbols on the seal in question, *śaṅkha* on one side and *cakra* on the other, are undoubtedly Vaiṣṇava emblems, the sun and the moon being shown as adjuncts on the top ; and in a temple seal of Śrī Viṣṇupāda-Svāmi Nārāyaṇa all these are quite appropriate.[1] The seals numbering 32 and 34 described by Bloch (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, p. 111, Pl. XLI) bear ornamental wheel on altar with two *śaṅkhas* one on either side ; the former bears the legend in two lines below the horizontal line with its ends turned up, *Jayaty-ananto bhagavān s-Āmbaḥ*, translated by him as ' Victorious is the lord Ananta (Śiva) with Ambā (Durgā).' But the emblems being Vaiṣṇava, Ananta and Ambā here refer to Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu (*cf. Bhagavadgītā*, VI, 16—Arjuna describes the Lord—*Paśyāmi tvāṃ sarvato'nantarūpam, Nāntaṃ na madhyaṃ na punastavādim* ; temples of god Ananta Vāsudeva are known from mediæval times onward) and his consort Lakṣmī (standing for Ambā which also means mother). The seal No. 37 has the *śrīvatsa* (wrongly described as shield by Bloch) on an altar flanked by two *śaṅkhas*, with a two-line inscription, *Jitaṃ bhagavato'nantasya naṃde(śva)rīvara-svāmina(h)*, the reading of which is doubtful ; Bloch translates it thus, ' Victorious is the Lord Ananta (Śiva), the chosen husband of Nandeśvarī (Durgā)'. The same remark as has been made with regard to Bloch's interpretation of the legend on No. 32 is applicable here ; Nandeśvarī is no doubt another synonym of Durgā, but it could also mean Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu (in the lexicons Nanda is given as

[1] Coomaraswamy's description of this seal reproduced by him as fig. 16 on Tafel 27, of *O.Z.*, 1927-28 requires modification, after what has been written above. He has not noticed the *śaṅkha*, and the left symbol should be properly named *gadā* and the right one is not fan as has been so hesitatingly suggested by him. His suggestion that the central emblem is *śrīvatsa* is correct.

another name of the god)—the character of the emblems supporting the above suggestion. Spooner's excavations in the Basarh site in 1913-14 brought up among others a few seals which are unique from the standpoint of Viṣṇuite iconography. The seal No. 54, without legend bears on its oval area a finely executed figure of a boar recumbent to the left the boar represents the Varāha *avatāra* of Viṣṇu. But the oval seal No. 191 is one of the most interesting in the series, for it shows the figure of Nṛsiṃha, his man-lion incarnation, seated facing in the *lalitāsana* pose on a high pedestal; his right arm is raised, while the left rests on hip; the legend, however, is extremely faint, and no certain reading of it can be offered. Spooner rightly remarks that 'it provides us with our oldest datable representation of the deity Nṛsiṃha in India'; the sealing is certainly of Gupta date. This device is very important, for it definitely shows that as early as the period when it was manufactured. this particular incarnatory form of Viṣṇu had acquired the form of the regular cult-picture usually placed in the main sanctum of a temple; it is distinct from the elaborate reliefs illustrative of the mythology underlying this incarnation, which were usually prominently placed in the subsidiary shrines in a Vaiṣṇava temple.

Of the many religious seals that were unearthed by Marshall at Bhita, only one bears the name of Vāsudeva; the much worn, nearly oval seal No. 21 in the series contains the legend in northern Gupta characters—*(Namo Bhagava)te Vāsude(vāya)*. Marshall says that the sealing is interesting, for it shows that Bhita possessed a temple of Vāsudeva in the Gupta period. The male figure on the seal No. 22, standing facing with its right hand outstretched below which is the variant of the *śrīvatsa* mark (Marshall describes the latter as a mark identical with the one figuring on a lead coin of Puḷūmāyi, reproduced by Rapson in *C.C.A.W.K.T.B.*, Pl. V, 105) and its left hand on hip with a conch-shell near left foot, is undoubtedly of Viṣṇu. The sacred character of the figure and the symbols is fully proved by the fact that all the three are placed on pedestals; the legend, however,

is defaced. Among the seals of officials and private individuals are to be found emblems which are Vaiṣṇava in character, the names of the former in many cases showing Vaiṣṇava features. Thus, the *śrīvatsa* mark on seal No. 86 is accompanied with a legend, tentatively read as *Vāsudevasya*, the wheel mark on No. 88, with *Padmanābha*, etc. Marshall remarks about the latter: 'The device of wheel may have been selected in allusion to the fact that Padmanābha is also an epithet of Viṣṇu, who wields the wheel' (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, pp. 50, 58; Pls. XVIII, XX).

The number of seals found at Rajghat bearing Vaiṣṇava emblems is small. One circular seal of black clay with the legend *(De ?)varātasvāmin(i ?)* in Gupta script bears a *cakra* flanked on either side by a *śaṅkha*. Another such seal has the same Vaiṣṇava emblems, the Gupta legend reading *Dharmanaddha*. An oval seal bears the legend *Buddhasya* in the Brāhmī script of the Kushan period in the middle, flanked on either side by standards with a *cakra* and a fish-tailed lion as capitals. The owner's name (Buddha) in association with the above emblems is interesting.

Lakṣmī very appropriately occurs several times in the sealings dug up at Basarh and Bhita. I have shown how frequently the type was utilised in Indian art of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period. With regard to the identity of a particular variety of this figure in early Buddhist monuments, there has been some difference of opinion among scholars. Marshall, in his latest monumental work on Sanchi (p. 96, f. n. 1), reconciles this difference; he says, 'Some of the Māyā figures on the balustrades and gateways are identical with the familiar type of Śrī-Lakṣmī, standing or seated on lotus, which the Buddhists evidently appropriated, along with so many other formulae and motifs, from the current art of the period, since it can hardly be doubted that the Śrī-Lakṣmī type goes back to a more remote age than Buddhism.' Now, there can be very little doubt about the character of this particular motif and its variants in the Gupta seals of

Bhita and Basarh; in the Gupta coins, she is figured in different ways, one of which being an exact Indian counterpart of the foreign Ardochso motif. The terracotta figurine of the Maurya-Śuṅga period (No. 550 in Spooner's list, *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, p. 116, Pl. XLIV) very probably presents us with a variety of the same goddess, in which she is distinguished by a pair of wings of a very unusual type, a scanty costume of the usual archaic type and ornaments like a huge pair of ear-rings, heavy bracelets and torque. Some very finely executed seals from Basarh of the Gupta period that were noticed by T. Bloch in his notes on Excavations at Basarh (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, pp. 107ff., Pls. XL and XLI) bear on them the Gaja-Lakṣmī figure and a few of its variants. The seal of the *Kumārāmātyādhikaraṇa* (*ibid*, p. 107, No. 3; 3 specimens were found) shows Lakṣmī standing in the midst of a group of trees with elephants pouring water over her and two dwarfish attendants holding objects like money-bags. Seal No. 4 of which as many as 28 specimens were found has the same goddess (*ibid*, Pl. XL, 10), but here the attendants are absent; No. 5, of which 9 specimens were discovered, shows the Gaja-Lakṣmī type, the left hand holding the stalk of a six-petalled flower and the two dwarfish attendants pouring out small objects from round pots; No. 6, of which 12 specimens are known, shows Gaja-Lakṣmī as above, but here the elephants stand on flowers, attended by a kneeling male on each side with a knob on his head and with a money-bag in front of each from which he throws down small round objects which are coins (Pl. XI, Fig. 1; the shape of the money-bag is exactly similar to that of the several bags shown under the so-called *Kalpadruma* capital found at Besnagar and noticed by me in detail in Chapter III). Many such figures more or less similar to one another were found by Bloch and it will not be necessary to define each of the types in detail. Bloch's suggestion about the attending figures of Lakṣmī in these seals that they were figures of Kubera, throwing down coins or pouring them out of round pots, is not wholly correct; for

they are not really Kuberas, but his Yakṣas who are the custodians of riches. The combination of Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, and the Yakṣas connected with riches is certainly not inappropriate, the idea being that these custodians dole out riches to those who are specially favoured by this goddess. Bloch remarks, 'The combination of Lakṣmī and Kubera, however, is not known to me to occur anywhere else in Indian art, and my theory should, therefore, only be regarded as hypothetical. I may, however, refer here to the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* passage, already quoted by me while explaining the Besnagar Capital in Chapter III; in connection with the enumeration of eight *nidhis*, the *Purāṇa* says, *Padminī nāma yā vidyā Lakṣmīstasyādhidevatā | Tadādhārāśca nidhayastān me nigadataḥ śṛṇu*.' Thus, the eight *nidhis* which are particularly associated with Kubera are the *ādhāras* of *Padminī vidyā* whose presiding deity is the goddess Lakṣmī. The unique seal No. 93, dug up at Basarh by Spooner (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, pp. 129-30, Pl. XLVI), bears the figure of a goddess, nimbate, facing, with her left hand on hip and right hand raised, standing on a high pedestal placed in the central part of what looks like a barge covering the entire area of the sealing. The presence of a small naturalistic *śaṅkha* to the left in the exergue above (the small standing animal cannot at all be clearly distinguished from Spooner's plate) discloses her probable identity. If we are justified in describing her as Lakṣmī, then her appearance in a barge, though unusual, is quite appropriate; for does not the goddess of wealth and prosperity reside in trade and commerce (*cf.* the oft-quoted saying—*Vāṇijye vasate Lakṣmīḥ*), and did not many of the owners of these seals belong to the order of the *Śreṣṭhi-sārthavāha-kulika-nigama*? Spooner remarks about the seal, 'There are no duplicates of this most peculiar and interesting seal, and there is no trace of any legend by which its origin and meaning could be learned. I should judge it to be the seal of some temple, and of a temple to some goddess of the waters.' But he is far too conjectural in his next observa-

tion, 'In the light of our Persian fire-altars and our winged terracottas at this site, is the cult of Anahita not perhaps suggested?' In the magnificent large official seal No. 200 (*ibid*, p. 134, Pl. XLVII), however, there can be no doubt about the identity of 'the central figure of Lakṣmī standing on a low pedestal, facing, with the two customary elephants above pouring water over her from jars held in their trunks.' There is a *śaṅkha* to her proper left while the uncertain object in the opposite side may be a variant of the *śrīvatsa* mark. The legend read by Spooner as '*Veśālināmakuṇḍe kumārāmātyādhikaraṇasya*' is interesting; Spooner is surprised at this form of the legend and cannot be sure whether the *kuṇḍa* here means a sacred spring as usual or not. But it might refer to the *markaṭahrada* or the monkey-tank at Vaiśālī, which, according to Hiuen Tsang, commemorated the miracle of Buddha's life associated with the locality. The long narrow oval sealing No. 208 (*ibid*, p. 134) bears a female figure with right hand outstretched and the left on hip, seeming to clasp a lotus stalk; the nimbus and the legend are defaced, and it may represent the Indian goddess of fortune. The impression of an oval seal, No. 312 (*ibid*, p. 140, Pl. XLVII), bears the device of a standing female figure, facing, with her right hand extended and the left clasping a tall lotus which rises above her shoulder; the one numbered 446 is a duplicate of this, and there is every reason to believe that in both Lakṣmī is represented.

A brief reference to the seals that were unearthed by Marshall at Bhita will show that figures of the goddess Śrī, more or less similar to the above types, are found on them. The seal No. 32 (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, p. 52, Pl. XVIII) bears Gaja-Lakṣmī, the elephants dousing her being placed on lotuses; the right hand of the goddess is raised above elbow, while the left rests on a bird (?) which may be Garuḍa, according to Marshall. But the latter may also be identified as a *chauri* held downwards, its handle looking like the neck of a bird; a *cakra* is placed to the immediate right. The name Viṣṇurakṣita among the long legend in eastern Gupta characters as well as the *cakra* shows the Viṣnuite

association of this seal. The seal No. 35 in the same series shows Gaja-Lakṣmī on lotus with a dwarfish figure seated on lotus with folded hands, on each side of the goddess; we have just discussed similar types at Basarh. The seal or token No. 42 (*ibid.*, p. 54, Pl. XIX) shows on its upper part the same goddess standing on a full-blown lotus, her both hands being raised above the elbows, her right hand holding *śaṅkha*, while her left, probably Garuḍa or the *chauri*; vases are shown on either side containing water or flowers, according to Marshall, but the little dots explained thus by Marshall may stand for coins or treasure. Coomaraswamy has discussed at great length the symbolism underlying the concept of Śrī-Lakṣmī, and the attending elephants in his article on 'Early Indian Iconography' (*Eastern Art*, Vol. I, pp. 175-189), wherein he has utilised these seal representations along with various other data concerning the subject. The circular seal No. 18, found at Bhita (*ibid.*, p. 50, Pl. XVIII), contains a vase (*bhadraghaṭa*) on pedestal; below it is written in northern characters of the Gupta period, *Sarasvatī*. The goddess of learning is thus represented here by means of the *ghaṭa* emblem. It has been suggested that the female figure standing by the side of a bull on the seals of Śivamegha and Bhīmasena found at Bhita may stand for Durgā; the oval seal No. 75 (*ibid.*, p. 57, Pl. XX) with legend that could not be read may also bear the same goddess in the person of the female figure which stands facing by the side of the bull recumbent to left, her left hand being placed on hip, while the right one is outstretched towards the erect trident-axe. Marshall compares it with the goddess standing by the stag on Kuninda coins. The lion standing facing on many seals hailing from Bhita and Basarh could have been explained as representing the Śakti cult, lion being the mount of Durgā; but one cannot be sure as most of the particular names associated with them are ascribed to Viṣṇu, who also has some very intimate mythological connection with a lion (*cf.* the Narasiṃha aspect of Viṣṇu, and Hari, another name of Viṣṇu, meaning also a lion).

Several Rajghat seals bear on them a few very interesting figures of goddesses. A circular sealing with a two-line legend, *Vārāṇasyādhi(ṣṭhā)nādhikaraṇasya* in Gupta script, shows a goddess standing facing on lotus ; to her proper right is a radiate disc on an elaborate pedestal and to her proper left, an indistinct object ; from her hands held downwards, treasures appear to trickle down. Another oval seal of sun-burnt clay bears a two-armed goddess standing facing, on a long pedestal, holding a wreath in the left hand and a four-pronged object in the right; her hair is braided; a snake with its face downwards is shown on her right ; the legend below in Gupta script is *Durggaḥ* (does the *devī* stand for Durgā, the consort of Śiva?). A round seal with pot and foliage on a pedestal and Gupta legend *Śrī sārasvata* reminds us of the Bhita seal No. 18 noted in the previous paragraph. Another oval sealing of the early Kushan period shows a goddess standing facing with hands akimbo ; the legend on her proper right is *Saghamita* (*ā*) ; she may, however, belong to the Buddhist creed.

A few other Brahmanical deities and their emblems can be recognised in the medley of seals and seal impressions found at Basarh, Bhita and Rajghat. The very fine temple seal No. 607 discovered by Spooner at Basarh (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, pp. 118-120, 140, Pl. XLIX) contains a perfect example of a fire-altar with probably the solar disc placed above it; the legend in Gupta characters is *Bhagavata Ādityasya*. I recognised on the coins of Pañcāla Bhānumitra the same deity, *viz.*, sun placed on an altar ; but here there may be some justification for Spooner's suggestion that the altar is a Persian fire-altar. The association of sun and fire in this instance may be directly due to the fire- and sun-worshipping Iranian Magi who must have influenced the local north-Indian sun-worship in the early centuries of the Christian era. Rapson, while writing on a similar device on a seal with Indian legend found at Sunet (*J.R.A.S.*, 1901, p. 98), suggested that it might be due to the Sassanian influence ; the fire-altar occurs on much earlier Kushan coins, on those of Wema Kadphises and others. Thus, this

will not prove Spooner's contention that 'this particular form of the fire-altar in Indian Archaeology, without attendant figures, is not due to any modification of Sassanian coinage through Kushan influence, but rather to the survival, in India itself, of the older, more original Persian tradition in such matters, which antedates the Sassanians themselves by many centuries.' A part of his other suggestion, that this particular seal with the legend noted above 'must be the seal of some temple, presumably in Eastern India, to the divinity of the Blessed Sun as worshipped in the cultus of the Persians domiciled in India,' is more acceptable ; but in place of the Persians domiciled in India, we are to understand eastern Iranians who migrated to India in large numbers with their cultus in the early post-Christian period. Bloch illustrated a seal found by him at Basarh (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, Pl. XL, No. 9) with the significant legend *Ravidāsa* (*ḥ*), ' the slave of the sun '. Marshall found a seal at Bhita (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, p. 58, No. 98), which bears the same device with the legend *Ādityasya ;* he rightly says that 'this emblem occurs on the coins of the Kushans, Guptas, Indo-Sassanians as also on a Gupta seal from Sunet',—the last one was described by Rapson whose remark about it has just been quoted. All these fairly prove that by the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., the eastern Iranian fire-sun cultus was thoroughly acclimatised in northern and eastern India and the north-Indian sun icons of the Gupta period and afterwards show unmistakable evidence of it

Among other cult-deities whose emblems or names can be found on those interesting terracotta objects, mention may be made of Skanda and Dhanada. An oval seal bearing a peacock standing to left with uplifted tail and the legend *Śrī Skandaśūrasya* was found by Marshall at Bhita (*op. cit.*, p. 58, No. 83). The oblong seal, No. 14, discovered by Spooner at Basarh bears a ' fan-tail peacock ' facing, the emblem peculiar to the eastern mintage of Gupta silver coins, issued by Kumāragupta I and some other successors of his ; the name of the banker, issuing it, is Vyāghrabala (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, p. 125, Pl. XLVII, No. 271 ; several impressions

of this seal were found at Basarh). An ivory seal matrix found at Rajghat shows a fan-tail peacock with legend *Śūragupta* in Gupta Script; the name and the emblem associate it with Kārttikeya. Another oval seal of the Gupta period, from the same place, shows two soldiers standing, holding spear in their right hands and with their left hands akimbo; the legend on the right reads—*Mahāśi*(a mistake for *śū*?)*rasya*. This seal device reminds us of the figures of Skanda-Komaro and Bizago on some coins of Huvishka already noted and the standing Dioscuri on the coins of such Indo-Greek kings as Diomedes, Archebius and others. Seal No. 722 unearthed at Basarh (Spooner, *ibid.*, p. 151, Pl. L) 'is exceptional, in that the device, a small naturalistic *śaṅkha*, occurs below the legend, which is in very raised *akṣaras* and reads (*Śrī-*)*Dhanadakasya.*' Now, Dhanada is a name of Kubera and the conch-shell here may justly stand for the *śaṅkhanidhi* of that god after whom the issuer of the seal was named. Some other unrecognisable figures, most probably of divinities, and unassignable emblems are found on these seals. One or two can be noticed here. A very interesting seal was discovered by Bloch at Basarh, which has for its device a man seated in Indian fashion, his raised left hand holding probably a branch of a tree and the long slender object placed in his right hand stretched over the knee is unrecognisable; the legend in Gupta characters is *Udana-kūpe pariṣadaḥ* (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, p. 109, Pl. XL, 12). The device, man with tail (?) holding down a bull by its horns, with uncertain legend on a seal that was also unearthed at Basarh by the same scholars is unidentifiable; Bloch says that 'it looks like an adoption of some classical design' (*ibid.*, p. 106, Pl. XLI, 17). The identity of the female figure standing between two trees appearing on an indifferently preserved seal found there cannot be ascertained (*ibid.*, p. 119, Pl. XLII, 56). A human figure, standing facing, right hand holding a staff and left hand hanging down (it distantly resembles the Śiva figures on the Ujjayinī coins, though the water-vessel is not present and the style is different), with an uncertain object to his right and defaced

legend in exergue, appears on the seal impression (*b*) on No. 109, discovered by Marshall at Bhita; he suggests that it is a 'representation of some sort of a *grāmadevatā* of the village'. The impression (*a*) on the same lump of clay (No. 109) bears a vase on pedestal and legend in early Gupta characters—*Vicchigrāma*, the ancient name of Bhita (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, p. 59, Pl. XXI). 'The fish on side on an oblong seal of Bilvedāsa' dug up in the same place may be an auspicious symbol of general application, as many other symbols, not definitely assignable to any of the cults, can be assumed to be. But when there is such uncertainty in the determination of the iconography of the device appearing on the seal, we shall not be justified in arriving at any far-reaching conclusions on the basis of this very feature alone. Spooner's conclusions based on this (*cf.* his lengthy dissertation on seal impression No. 572 A, *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, pp. 146-47, as also on pp. 120 and 129-30—the character of the last two has been determined in a different way) were easily challenged by others who could not see eye to eye with him.

The rapid survey of the terracotta seals from the cult point of view has enabled us to collect some fresh data which are eminently useful for the study of Brahmanical Hindu iconography. Bloch observed in connection with his excavations at Basarh, 'The evidence of the emblems on the seals, so far as they have any connection with religious worship, together with the names occurring in the inscriptions and the seals bearing benedictory formulas, rather lead me to conclude that most of the persons to whom the seals belonged were followers of the Brahmanical creed or Jainas, not Buddhists' (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, p. 105). Bloch was not aware of the identity of the *śrīvatsa* mark which he described as an ornamental *triśūla*, though he rightly remarked that he names it thus 'without pretending to have found the true name of the symbol'; now the very same mark, though it may be connected with the Jaina cult, cannot be assigned this character, when associated with such symbols as ornamental wheel, knotted club (*gadā*) and conch-shell which when taken together will have to be regarded as Vaiṣṇava

ones. The two human feet which so frequently appear on the sealings discovered by him and less so on those dug up by Marshall and Spooner can no doubt be explained as Buddha-pāda or Jina-pāda; but in consideration of the symbols on many other seals they can much better be interpreted as Viṣṇu-pāda. Similarly, the *kalasa* on so many seals in association with the particular legends and other emblems may mostly be the Brahmanical auspicious sign. Moreover, the appearance of several Śivaliṅgas more or less realistic in character, the different varieties of the goddess of fortune, the representations of Umā and Arddhanārīśvara, the earliest figure of Narasiṃha as a cult deity, etc. on these seals and seal impressions greatly enhance our knowledge of Hindu iconography.

CHAPTER VI

Icono-plastic Art in India—Factors contributing to its Development

The data which have been gathered together and presented by me in the three preceding chapters prove that the construction of images and other objects associated with the worship of the deity with deep loving faith was fairly well prevalent in India during the few centuries preceding the Christian era and those immediately succeeding it. From the multiplicity of evidence in support of the above hypothesis it would be natural for us to expect a large number of very early images belonging to the various sectaries, both orthodox and heterodox from the Brahmanical standpoint, from various parts of India. True it is that several free-standing Yakṣa statues or relievo-figures principally associated with early Buddhist funerary monuments have been discovered, which can go back to two or possibly three centuries before the Christian era; it is also true that many Buddhist, and several Jain and Brahmanical images and sculptures have been discovered in stray groups from distant parts of India like Gandhāra, Mathura and Amaravati that belong to two or three centuries after its commencement. But when we consider the vastness of the Indian continent and think of the religious needs of the majority of her untold millions of people, we cannot but be struck with the fact that the actual discovery of the extant images going back to these earlier times is quite incommensurate with our expectations. The reasons for this extreme paucity have been briefly mentioned by me *in passim* in the last part of the introductory chapter of this book. The iconoclastic zeal of the image-haters of alien faith, the ever-active spoliation of ancient religious structures for building materials by the utilitarian vandals of mediaeval and modern times and the natural causes of decay and destruction were no doubt

responsible to a great extent for this comparative infrequency of early finds of images. The ancient practice of making images in such perishable materials as wood and clay is also one of the main reasons which explain the above fact. In the Vedic times, in the fashioning of the ritual implements that were necessary for the correct performance of particular sacrifices, wood was the principal material that was used, and the altars of various shapes and kinds were made of clay and bricks. In referring to the materials out of which the god Viśvakarmā could have created the universe the one that comes foremost to the mind of the Vedic seer is wood. The hymnist asks, 'Which was the forest and what was the tree out of whose wood the heaven and earth were carved?' (*R.V.*, X, 81, 4—*Kiṃ svidvanaṃ ka u sa vṛkṣa āsa yato dyāvāpṛthivī niṣṭatakṣuḥ*). It is natural that wood should be easily thought of in the construction of structures and other objects, for it is not only one of the easily procurable materials but also is an important one among such, being the easiest to work upon. It is no wonder then that we find so many passages in early Indian iconographic texts expatiating on the selection of wood to be used in the construction of images. Some of these are taken notice of here; attention of the reader, however, needs to be drawn *in passim* to the extreme care and consideration, which is enjoined by the writers of these texts on the image-makers in the cutting of the particular trees whose wood should be employed by them for the shaping of the *arcā* of the god.

Some writers on Indian iconography and iconometry have noted the importance of chapter 57 on *Pratimālakṣaṇam* of Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Sudhakar Dvivedi's edition) and have utilised its contents to some extent; but practically no notice has as yet been taken by them of the next chapter, *viz.*, *Vanasampraveśādhyāya* and its bearing on the art of image-making in ancient India. The latter lays down details regarding the ceremony of securing wood from the forest trees, and bringing it home for the purpose of making images of gods and goddesses. We are first told that the image-maker should enter into the forest on an auspicious day selected by

the astrologer and be careful about the omens which he might see on his way to it. Then a list of trees which are to be avoided in the search for proper wood is given; trees which grow in cremation ground, by the side of roads, near temples, or on ant-hills, in gardens and hermitages, *caitya* or *sthala vṛkṣas*, those growing by the confluences of rivers, or which are planted by human hands, extremely bent ones, trees growing very close to other trees or overgrown with creepers, trees struck by lightning or broken by storms, falling by themselves or damaged by elephants, dried or burnt trees, or those on which bees make their hives, are not to be selected by the sculptor. Next are given the names of those the wood of which is to be used for making images; *deodar, candana, śamī, madhuka* for images to be set up by Brahmans; *ariṣṭa, aśvattha, khadira, bilva* for those to be made for the Kṣatriyas; *jīvaka, khadira, sindhuka* and *syandana* are auspicious for images (to be enshrined) by the Vaiśyas; *tinduka, keśara, sarja, arjuna, āmra* and *sāla* are (proper) for the Śūdras.[1] Before the selected tree is to be felled by axe certain rites are to be performed by the sculptor. First he is to mark off on its trunk the various sections of the *Liṅgam* or image to be made out of it in order that the top, bottom and the sides of the object to be fashioned may correspond to those of the trunk of the tree.[2] Next he will propitiate the tree with various offerings and worship the gods, manes, Rākṣasas, Nāgas, Asuras, Gaṇas, and

[1] *Suradāru-candana-śamī-madhukataravaḥ śubhā dvijātīnām*
Kṣatrasyāriṣṭāśvattha-khadira-bilvā vivṛddhikarāḥ ||
Vaiśyānāṃ jīvaka-khadira-sindhuka-syandanāśca śubhaphaladāḥ
Tinduka-keśara-sarjārjunāmraśā'lāśca śūdrāṇām ||
(Verses 5-6).

The same list is given by Kāśyapa in his work; Utpala quotes three couplets from it in his commentary.

[2] *Liṅgaṃ vā pratimā vā drumavat sthāpyā yathādiśaṃ yasmāt*
Tasmāccihnayitavyā diśo drumasyordhvamathavādhaḥ || (Verse 7).

Kāśyapa says :—
Vṛkṣavat pratimā kāryā prāgbhāgādyupalakṣitā
Pādāḥ pādeṣu karttavyāḥ śirṣamūrdhve tu kārayet ||

Vināyakas at night and utter the following *mantra*, touching the tree with his hands :—

> Oh, thou tree, salutation to thee, thou art selected for (being fashioned into) the icon of this particular deity ; please accept this offering according to rules. May all the spirits which reside in this tree transfer their habitation elsewhere after accepting the offerings made according to rules ; may they pardon me today (for disturbing them) ; salutation to them.[1]

Lastly, in the morning, after sprinkling water on the tree and smearing the blade of his axe with honey and clarified butter, he should cut round the trunk rightwards, beginning from the north-east corner. In the last verse of the chapter the author states that further details about the felling of the tree, omitted by him in this chapter, have been described in his chapters on Indradhvaja and Vāstuvidyā, and the same should apply in this case also. The information which we gather from a study of this chapter is also supplied to us in various other texts like the sections on architecture and sculpture of the Purāṇas like *Bhaviṣya*, *Viṣṇudharmottara*, *Matsya* and others and such works as *Mānasāra*, etc. Of these the chapter of *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* on *Pratimāvidhi* (Ch. 131) in the Prathama Brāhma Parva which begins just after the chapter on *Prāsādalakṣaṇavarṇanam* gives details more or less similar to those noted above. Nārada, while explaining to Sāmba rules for the construction of images of gods in general and Sūrya in particular, mentions that seven kinds of images tending to the welfare of the devotees are known, *viz.*, those made of gold, silver, copper, earth or clay, stone, wood and the ones that are drawn (on canvas and

[1] *Arcārthamamukasya tvaṃ devasya parikalpitaḥ* ।
Namaste vṛkṣa pūjeyaṃ vidhivat sampragṛhyatāṃ ॥
Yānīha bhūtāni vasanti tvayi baliṃ gṛhītvā vidhivat prayuktam ।
Anyatra vāsaṃ parikalpayantu kṣamantu tānyadya namo'stu tebhyaḥ ॥ (Verses 10-11).

The same *mantra* is to be found in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* chapter on *Pratimāvidhi*, a few other passages common to both can be found in the two.

other objects) ; of these Nārada selects those made of wood as deserving special notice.[1] This shows that wood was the most frequently used material for image-making from very early times. In the *Viṣṇudharmottara* a whole chapter entitled *Devālayārtha dāruparīkṣaṇam* (Bk. III, Ch. 89) is devoted to the details of procuring wood for temple-building and image-making activities, and rules similar to the above for marking off the different sections of the images and building posts on the trunk of the tree are incorporated.[2] The next two chapters deal with *Śilāparīkṣā* and *Iṣṭakāparīkṣā*, in the former of which rites enjoined are somewhat similar to those mentioned in connection with *Dāruparīkṣā*. The *Mānasāra*, a work giving details of architectural construction its foremost consideration, deals at great length with the topic of *Dārusaṃgrahaṇa* in lines 251-347 in the chapter on *Stambhalakṣaṇam* (P. K. Acharya's Edition, Ch. XV, pp. 103 ff.). These particulars are of the same nature as those gleaned from the other texts, but here they apply chiefly to the construction of wooden columns. A formidable list of *śakunas* is given in lines 260-94 ; in lines 295-304 are mentioned rules about sacrifices to the various kinds of evil spirits, the eight Dikpālas beginning with Indra and ending with Īśāna, to eight Rākṣasas like Mukhya, Mṛga, Aditi, Udita, Vitatha, Antarīkṣa, Bhṛśa

[1] *Atha te sampravakṣyāmi pratimāvidhivistaram* ।
Sarveṣāmeva devānāmādityasya viśeṣataḥ ॥
Arcā saptavidhā proktā bhaktānāṃ śubhavṛddhaye ।
Kāñcanī rājatī tāmrī pārthivī śailajā smṛtāḥ ॥
Vārkṣī cālekhyakāceti mūrtisthānāni sapta vai ।
Vārkṣividhānaṃ te vīra varṇayiṣyāmyaśeṣataḥ ॥
Bhaviṣyapurāṇa, Bk. 1, Ch. 131, Verses 1-3.

[2] *Agram mūlaṃ prayatnena kartavyaṃ tasya cihnāni—*
Agraṃ devasya mūrdhānaṃ pādaṃ mūlaṃ tu kārayet ।
Arcākṛtā viparyastā tiryagvā māraṇāvahā ॥
Agramūlaṃ viparyāsaṃ stambhānāṃ ca vivarjayet ।
Agramūlaviparyāse kṛte veśmakṣayaṃ vrajet ॥
Pūrvāgrā cottarāgrā vā drumā yojyā gṛheṣu ca ।
.....
Tasmāt sarvaprayatnena cihnaistaṃ kārayed drumam ।
Agre mūle ca dharmajñastataḥ samyak praveśayet ॥

and Pūṣan, and lastly to the Vanaspati.[1] The whole of the chapter 257 entitled *Vāstuvidyānukīrtanam* of the *Matsyapurāṇa* deals with the *Dārvāharaṇavidhi* in a succinct way; the next few chapters (258-263) expatiate on details of iconometry and iconography, incidentally referring to different kinds of materials used for image-making. Thus, while recording the characteristic signs of the pedestals (*pīṭhikā*), the author remarks that stone, earthen, wooden and mixed pedestals are to be assigned to images which are made of stone, earth, wood and mixed materials, respectively.[2] In the next chapter on *Liṅgalakṣaṇam*, the author expressly mentions in the last verse that ' *Liṅgas* should be made of (such materials) as precious metals, crystals, earth and wood in the manner laid down in the previous lines.' [3]

It will be of interest to refer in this connection to the different classifications of images on the basis of materials out of which they were made, mentioned in a few other texts. Gopala Bhatta, purporting to quote from the *Matsyapurāṇa* and *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*, supplies us with two such groupings in his *Haribhaktivilāsa*. The first is that images can be divided into four broad divisions, *viz.*, *citrajā* those that are painted on canvas, wall or *pātra*, *i.e.*, a jar or a pot), *lepajā* (made of clay), *pākajā* (made of molten metal, *i.e.*, cast images) and *śastrotkīrṇā* (carved by metal instruments). The second list includes seven different varieties, *viz.*, *mṛṇmayī*, *dārughaṭitā*, *lohajā*, *ratnajā*, *śailajā*, *gandhajā* and *kausumī*. It will be seen that with the exception of the

[1] A few other details are recorded here; one such refers to three sex groups among the trees. The last lines in this section are :

Vṛkṣasya mūlaṃ mūle ca agre cāgraṃ tathaiva ca ।
Bhūmisparśamukhaṃ jñātvā tadūrdhvaṃ parabhāgataḥ ॥

The first of them can be freely translated thus : ' The base (of the column) is (to be marked) on the lower part of the trunk of the tree, while the capital (of the column) is (to be marked) on its upper part.' The second line does not make any sense; Acharya's translation of it as 'the part other than these (*i.e.* the middle part) is known to be that which touches (*i.e.*, makes) the body, *i.e.* the shaft of the column ' is unwarranted.

[2] *Śaile śailamayīṃ dadyāt pārthive pārthivīṃ tathā* ।
Dāruje dārujāṃ kuryānmiśre miśrāṃ tathaiva ca ॥

[3] *Evaṃ ratnamayaṃ kuryāt sphāṭikaṃ parthivaṃ tathā* ।
Śubhaṃ dārumayañcāpi yadvā manasi rocate ॥

last two in the second list (or one, *viz.*, *kausumī*, because *gandhajā* may come under *lepajā* in the first list), which are evidently *kṣaṇika* images, all the others in it can very well come under the first one. The *Śukranītisāra* refers to eight kinds of materials thus :—*Pratimā saikaṭī paiṣṭī lekhyā lepyā ca mṛṇmayī* । *Vārkṣī pāṣāṇa-dhātūtthā sthirā jñeyā yathottarā* (IV, 4, 72). In this list several new materials occur, such as *sikatā* (sand) and *piṣṭa* (substance ground and then mixed with water into a dough) ; the latter evidently refers here to such a material as rice powder mixed with water (in colloquial Bengali it is called *piṭuli*) and not to the compound which is called stucco. Each succeeding material in this list is more durable than the preceding one, and the metal images are described as the most permanent (*sthirā*) among them. The *Samarāṅganasūtradhara*, a late anthology by king Bhojadeva, also refers in these lines to the seven kinds of images :—*Pratimānāmatha brūmo lakṣaṇaṃ dravyameva ca* । *Suvarṇa-rūpya-tāmrāśma-dārulekhyāni śaktitaḥ* ‖ *Citraṃ ceti vinirdiṣṭaṃ dravyamarcāṣu saptadhā* (Gaekwar Oriental Series, Vol. II, Ch. I, v. 1). This list is practically the same as that in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, noticed above, with this difference only that it omits reference to clay images while mentioning pictorial representations twice under the heads *lekhya* and *citra*. That clay was undoubtedly one of the most commonly used media for making images (as it is so used now in Bengal for the making of *kṣaṇika* or impermanent ones) is fully borne out by a very interesting passage quoted by Gopala Bhatta from *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* which lays down rules about preparing clay for this purpose. It can be freely translated thus :—'Members of all castes, from the highest downwards, should collect earth from river banks, cultivated fields or sacred places ; then equal portions of powdered stone, *karkarā* (sand) and iron should be mixed with it and the whole mixture should be pressed with some astringents ; extracts of *khadira*, *arjjuna*, *sarjja*, *śrī*, *veṇṭa* (?) and *kuṅkuma*, *kauṭaja* and *āyasa* wood, and curds, milk and clarified butter should be repeatedly stirred up with the above ; the whole compound should then be left over for a

month till it is ready to be shaped into images."[1] This mode of the preparation of clay, however, shows that the material thus prepared was used for making images far more durable than ordinary clay ones, some of its constituents being powdered iron and stone. This compound is much similar to the material known as stucco which was so copiously used by the Hellenistic artists of Gandhāra from the third to the fifth century A.D.; if we are to understand that limestone is meant by the word *pāṣāṇa*, then the similarity becomes greater. This seems to be the substance which was so frequently used in making many figure sculptures on the towering *gopuras* of many of the south Indian temples. We are further informed in the same text that a central wooden frame or core designated here as *pratimāśūla* of a length of 120 or 125 *aṅgulas* (*daśatāla* or *uttamadaśatāla* measurement) and made of *khadira* or *yajñīya* (*yajñaḍumbura*) wood is to be set up on the *ratnanyāsa* (*ratnavedī* or altar on which the image is placed), whereon the different limbs of the image are to be modelled according to the proportions laid down in the text.[2] Reference has already been made to the *Matsya-purāṇa* passage where there is mention of mixed materials used for image-making; evidently the compound just noted falls under this category. The text is of unique importance; it not only gives the formula for the preparation of the stucco-like substance, but also shows how wood, clay and such other

[1] *Mṛttikāvarṇapūrveṇa gṛhṇīyussarvavarṇinaḥ* 1
Nadītire'thavā kṣetre puṇyasthāne'thavā punaḥ ||
Pāṣāṇa-karkarā-lohacūrṇāni samabhāgataḥ 1
Mṛttikāyāṃ prayojyātha kaṣāyena prapīḍayet ||
Khadireṇārjjunenātha sarjjaśrīveṇṭakuṅkumaiḥ 1
Kauṭajairāyasaiḥ snehairdadhikṣīraghṛtādibhiḥ ||
Ālodya mṛttikāṃ taistaiḥ sthāne sthāpya punaḥ punaḥ 1
Māsaṃ paryuṣitaṃ kṛtvā pratimāṃ parikalpayet ||
Haribhaktivilāsa. 18th vilāsa.

[2] *Sthāpayet pratimāśūlaṃ ratnanyāsasya copari* 1
Śūlañca khādirādīnāṃ yajñīyānāṃ prakalpayet ||
Viṃśottaraśataṃ śūlaṃ kuryādvā pañcaviṃśatiḥ 1
Pratimāṅgulamānena kṛtvā saṃsthāpayed budhaḥ ||
Haribhaktivilāsa, 18.

This wooden core (*pratimāśūla*) in modern clay images of Bengal is described as *kāṭhāmo* in Bengali language; the word is derived from *kāṭha* or *kāṣṭha* meaning wood. At present, it is made of bamboo slits and straw.

perishable materials were mixed up for making images of a comparatively durable nature.

The above extracts fully prove how in ancient and mediaeval India, wood, as well as clay, was one of the commonest media for making images. Texts like the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* and the chapter 58 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* which lay special stress on wood as the material for image-making are of comparatively early date, because they take stock of earlier traditional practice. Some of the later texts like *Agnipurāṇa*, though mentioning it among other materials, chiefly expatiate upon the use of stone. Scholars, after a careful study of the early extant architectural remains throughout India, came to the conclusion long ago that much of the form and technique of their construction was influenced by their earlier and commoner prototypes of wooden structures. It can very well be presumed that some of the characteristic features of the several extant early Indian sculptures in the round and many relief carvings show their intimate connection with wooden sculptures which were common in ancient times. From this it does not necessarily follow that the indigenous artists of India first learnt to use stone for architectural and sculptural purposes after their contact with the foreigners. But the data collected above prove that stone, though certainly in use from a very early date, was much less frequently employed than wood and clay. In the 6th chapter of *Antagaḍa Dasāo*, a Jaina text, we find a clear reference to the wooden image of the Yakṣa Moggarapāṇi in a shrine outside the city of Rājagṛha. Even long after stone began to be principally used for image-making, wooden images continued to be made by the artists. The finely carved wooden pillar bearing figure sculptures and decorative motifs on it discovered at Arial near Dacca and now preserved in the Arial Museum, and the weather-beaten standing Viṣṇu and several other objects of carved wood in the collection of the Dacca Museum show that wood remained as one of the principal media for image-making. The wooden images of Jagannātha, Balarāma and Subhadrā enshrined in the main sanctum at Puri are renewed every twelve years and the old

ones are buried underground in an unfrequented part of the extensive temple compound. Images of many village and cult deities even now enshrined in Bengal for daily worship (*nityapūjā*) are mostly made of wood with bright colours painted on them; these images are reconditioned and freshly painted at regular intervals. Very few wooden images, however, of any antiquity have so far been discovered; the reason is obvious. In this tropical country with its humid climate and infested by destructive agencies like white ants and rats, wooden objects seldom attain to great age. Herein lies one of the explanations of the extreme paucity of the extant images of the pre-Christian period in India. References to images in the literature and inscriptions of India to be dated in the 3rd century B. C., if not earlier, are found; but few, if any, are the images discovered up till now which can be confidently dated back to this period. Two other interesting deductions can be made from the data collected above. The first is that the wide celebrity of the artists of such centres as Mathura, Gandhāra and Sarnath might have been greatly due to the fact that they made more systematic and constant use of such durable materials as red sandstone, black slate and Chunar sandstone. The second is that the method of colouring stone images with appropriate paints, so much practised in earlier times, was due to their wooden prototypes which were surely coated with paint in ancient days (it is still the custom everywhere).

Of the seven different kinds of *mūrtisthānas*, *i.e.*, materials for the making of images, several others, such as metal, stone and paint, etc., require to be considered at some detail. The metal images, especially the bronze ones, fall under the *pākajā* class as has been mentioned above and the discovery of some early specimens fully proves that the Indian artists were quite adept in the art of bronze casting. In fact, the skill they displayed in the casting of the beautiful bronze Buddha of the early Gupta period, found at Sultanganj and now in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, is unique; it can surely rank as one of the best specimens. The gold-plated bronze image of Mañjuśrī recovered from the Balai

Dhap mound, close to the ruins of Mahāsthān and now in the Rajshahi Museum, is another fine specimen of the same art, though of a slightly later date. It is unfortunate that very few, if any at all, earlier bronze images have so far been found, but the discovery of those mentioned above proves that the Indian artists had long experience in this branch of fine arts. The uninscribed and inscribed cast coins of the pre-Christian period, some of them going back to an age as early as the 2nd or 3rd century B.C., if not earlier, do not portray, it is true, that excellence which is evinced by the bronze images of a later date. But it should be borne in mind that the Indians in their early efforts at coinage both in the issues of the punch-marked and cast coins, especially the former, were never very successful, and the crudeness with which some of the purely indigenous money were being manufactured up till recent times should be noted.[1] The metal-casters' art, especially in the fashioning of divine images, on the other hand, remained throughout at a high level and the mediaeval bronze statues and statuettes from Nalanda, Kurkihar, Jhaveri (Chittagong) and other places of eastern India, and Chamba, Rajputana, etc., of northern India and the bronze images found at Negapatam, Madura and various other parts of southern India amply testify to the truth of the remark made above.

It is however interesting to note that though a few texts contain detailed descriptions of the method of casting images, there are many others which remain silent about it. The earliest of the latter, as we have shown, lay down rules for making images in wood and clay, materials comparatively inexpensive and easily procurable. A devotee who wished to give some sort of permanency to the image of his god would naturally think about stone of various kinds; and texts incorporated in the Purāṇas and Āgamas give minute details

[1] The copper coins of Udaipur, Mewar, now known as *ḍhiṅglā*, and some of them formerly known also as *triśūliāñ* on account of their bearing on them the device of a trident, can be mentioned as an example. W. W. Webb informs us that these coins were still being manufactured as late as the sixties of the last century: *The Currencies of Rajputana*, p. 18.

about the method of stone-carving. But the casting of large-sized metal images was an elaborate process and required a great deal of expense and could thus be practised only occasionally. This is borne out by the significant observation of T. A. G. Rao that 'metal is rarely employed in the making of *dhruva-beras;* this material is almost exclusively used for casting *utsava*, *snapana* and *bali* images,' the latter being usually small ones cast solid. The compilers of the later group of the iconographic and iconometric texts usually incorporated rules and canons which would be mostly in demand for supplying the religious needs of the general class of devotees belonging to various sects. But rules about the method of casting for the use of the more skilled technicians were no doubt collected by some of the ancient and mediaeval iconographers of India. A few comparatively late compilations, thus, base their description of this method, called the '*Madhūcchiṣṭa-vidhānam,*' on these collections. The word *madhūcchiṣṭa* means bees' wax, *i.e.*, what is left over (*ucchiṣṭa*) after the honey is strained. In this process, which is known to the western artists as '*cire perdue*' or 'lost wax', the molten metal is left over in the earthen mould to congeal after the wax is gradually melted away by heat, and as the bees' wax played the most important part in it, the process acquired its name after it. Gopinath Rao quotes three passages from *Kāraṇāgama*, *Suprabhedāgama* and *Viṣṇusaṃhitā;* the first two merely testify to the use of bees' wax in metal casting, while the last mentions briefly the process thus : 'if an image is to be made of metal, it must first be made in wax and then coated with earth ; gold or other metals are purified and cast into (the mould) and a complete (and fully solid—*sarvatoghanam*) image is thus obtained by capable workmen.'[1] The *Mānasāra* (P. K. Acharya's Edition) devotes a complete chapter (LXVIII) for describing the method of casting images in metal.

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, p. 51 : *lohe sikthamayīṃ arcāṃ kārayitvā mṛdāvṛtāṃ suvarṇādini saṃśodhya vidrāvyāṅgāravapunah kuśalaiḥ kārayed yatnāt sampūrṇaṃ sarvato ghanam: Viṣṇusaṃhitā*, Paṭala, XIV (a Pāñcarātra text).

S. K. Saraswati rightly points out, however, that the whole chapter is concerned chiefly with the ritualistic side of the subject ; and the meagre information regarding the technique of the process is hardly intelligible, on account of the extremely corrupt form of the text. Saraswati has drawn our attention to the first *prakaraṇa* of the *Abhilaṣitārthacintāmaṇi*, also known as *Mānasollāsa Śāstra*, said to have been composed by king Someśvara Bhūlokamalla of the Western Cālukya line of Kalyānī, who came to the throne in 1124-25 A.D. In connection with the topic of 'adoration to the gods' (*devatābhakti*) the *prakaraṇa*, consisting of 21 verses, gives a succinct but by far the best account about the process of manufacture of metal images.[1]

The text first refers to the preparation of the image (*i.e.*, the model, evidently made of wax, though not expressly said so here) complete with all the details, according to the *navatāla* measurement ; then instructions are given about the placing of wax-tubes on its back, shoulders and the neck or crown and besmearing it with refined clay in three layers. Rules for the preparation of the clay are given in detail and it is needless to say that they are very different from those mentioned in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*. The clay coatings should be made in regular intervals and be carefully dried up in the shade. The textual injunction to be noted is that the amount of wax used to prepare the model should be weighed in the very beginning by the wise artist (*sikthakaṃ tolayedādāvarccālagnaṃ ricakṣaṇaḥ*). Then the particular metal out of which the casting is to be done should be measured according to certain proportions ; if the image is to be made of brass or copper, the metal should weigh ten times (or eight times according to a variant reading), if of silver, twelve times, and if of gold, sixteen times, the weight of the wax model, according to the specific gravity of the metals. Then the measured metal should be encased in a cocoanut shaped earthen crucible (*nārikelākṛtiṃ mūṣām*), and the wax from the clay-coated mould should be melted away by heating the

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol IV, No. 2, p. 139ff, S. K. Saraswati on ' An ancient text on the casting of metal images'.

image in fire. The crucible with the metal within ought to be so heated that the latter may form a liquid mass; then after puncturing the top of the crucible with an iron rod, the whole molten metal should be carefully poured down the mouth of the tube. When the molten metal has congealed after cooling down, the clay coating should be broken up very carefully. Any superfluous metal and tubes adhering to the fully fashioned metal image should be filed away with a *cāraṇa* (a file?), and lastly the whole should be brightly polished (*paścādujjvalatāṃ nayet*). When this is all done in the manner prescribed above, the king should instal it on an auspicious day according to the usual rites and should offer daily worship to it.[1] Saraswati remarks that the above text 'does not say whether the model would have to be made of solid wax or with an inner core.' But a perusal of the text will show that it does seem to refer to solid casting which was the general rule in case of small images. In the case of bigger images, the method of hollow casting seems to have been followed in consideration of their cost and weight. Several of the earliest big metal images of India, the Mahāsthān Mañjuśrī and the Sultanganj Buddha mentioned above, exhibit a core still sticking tightly to their inside. From this it seems that the wax model was worked over an inner compound probably consisting of charred husk, finely rubbed clay, thoroughly carded cotton and powdered salt—the same ingredients that were used in the preparation of the clay for applying to the outside of the wax mould. Another edited text on metal casting is found in a section of the *Śilparatna* of Śrīkumāra who flourished in the 16th century A.D.; it may be noted here. It consists of twenty-two verses incorporated in the second chapter (verses 32-53) of the printed edition of *Śilparatna*, Part II, by T. Ganapati Sastri. The text, though corrupt, seems to lay down details which are concerned with hollow casting. The first verse (*Madhūcchiṣṭena nirmāya sakalaṃ niṣkalaṃ tu vā* | *Baddhvā mṛdā dṛḍhaṃ śuṣkamadhūcchiṣṭaṃ bahiḥ*

[1] The above is a summary of S. K. Saraswati's translation of the text under observation.

sṛjet) and verses 42ff. speak of a process in which the inside of the image remains hollow after the wax inside and the wax outside are melted away by heat. The last verse (No. 53, *viz., Ghanaṃ cellohajaṃ vimbaṃ madhūcchiṣṭena kevalaḥ* | *Kṛtvā mṛllepanādīni pūrvavat kramataścaret*) does nothing but refer to the casting of *ghana, i.e.*, solid images. That metal images cast hollow were made is fully proved by writers on Smṛti works like Manu and others who refer to such images heated from within which an adulterer would have to embrace as a sort of punishment. The Ṛgvedic passage *sūrmyaṃ suṣirāmiva* (VIII. 69, 12), though not referring to an image of the god meant for worship, seems also to refer to the practice of hollow casting.

Elaborate details are laid down in early and late texts about the selection of proper kind of stone for the making of images. The earlier ones, however, have special preference for wood as we have already shown from such texts as *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* and the *Matsyapurāṇa*. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* lays down elaborate rules not only for the selection of wood, but also for that of stone to be used in making durable images of gods. The whole of the nineteenth chapter, entitled *Śilāparīkṣā*, of the third book of the *Viṣṇudharmottara* deals with this topic and the details mentioned there closely follow those enjoined in connection with *Dāruparīkṣā*. In the first few verses it is laid down that the *sthapati* will go to a hill and select a particular kind of stone for image. White, red, yellow and black stones are used for the Brāhmaṇ, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra devotees, respectively. Stone that is suitable for such images should be one-coloured, smooth, imbedded in earth, without any grains of sand in its layers, good to look at, washed by spring water or merged in water, shaded by trees and hailing from sacred *tīrthas*, of good length, breadth and thickness (*āyāmapariṇāhādhyam*). Stones, that are not so, are those which are burnt by sun-rays, which are used for other works, which contain alkaline water, which are very rough, which are marked with minute spots or patches of different shape and size (*Tilaiḥ sambhūṣitā yā tu vicitrairvindumiśritā*) and so on (on this authority the

spotted red sandstone of Mathura will be unsuited for image-making). Then mention is made of various modes of testing the selected stone,—the test consisting of different kinds of *śilālepas*, a few recipes of which are given; the application of this test to the stone and the reactions which will follow will show whether the stone is worth collecting for images or not. After being fully satisfied on all these points, the artist will take the selected stone according to rules to the temple for being fashioned into the divine image. The last part of the eighteenth *vilāsa* of Gopala Bhatta's *Haribhakti-vilāsa*, entitled *Śilāgrahaṇam*, is devoted to the consideration of the same subject. He quotes extensively from the section of the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*, which elaborately deals with the rituals connected with entrance into the forest, selection of flawless one-coloured stone, worshipping the god Viṣṇu, offering of *bali* to the guardians of the quarters, worshipping the selected stone with sandal paste, flowers and *naivedya* and propitiating the various Yātudhānas, Guhyakas and Siddhas who may reside in the stone or in its vicinity and asking their permission to use the stone for the image of Viṣṇu and entreating them to go to reside in another place with these words—'*Viṣṇuviṃbārthamasmākaṃ yatraiṣā Keśavājñayā* | *Viṣṇvarthaṃ yadbhavet kāryaṃ yuṣmākamapi tad bhavet* || *Anena balidānena prītā bhavatha sarvathā* | *Kṣemeṇa gacchatānyatra muktā sthānamidaṃ punaḥ*'. The Pāñcarātra text also refers to the significance of the various dreams which the selectors of the stone might dream while sleeping at night near it. Then early in the morning of the next day, after the performance of the daily rites and paying respects to the stone and the stone-cutting implements, the sculptor with the *ṭaṅka* (stone-mason's chisel) in hand (*śilpī ṭaṅkahastaḥ*) should commence his work. The stone for the image should measure a little more than the image to be fashioned out of it. After cutting it out and raising it up, it should be brought near the temple, and the wise (donor) should have the work begun by expert artists (*Tataḥ pravartayet karma vidvān viññaistu śilpibhiḥ*). In the section under *Śilā-lakṣaṇam*, the *Hayaśīrṣa* refers to various kinds of stones that

are to be avoided.[1] A list of different kinds of stone fit for being fashioned into the images of Vāsudeva Viṣṇu is now given. Those stones which are procured from sacred places, which are found merged in rivers, on shady hills or under ground, not burnt by sun-rays, which are of one pleasing colour like pale brown, red, yellow or black (*pāṇḍurā cāruṇā pītā kṛṣṇā śastā ca varṇinām*) are recommended. Then details are given about different types of stones such as *yuvā* (youthful), *madhyā* (of middle age), *bālā* (very young) and *vṛddhā* (old), of which the first two only are to be used for images (these refer to the geological age of particular varieties); stones of masculine, feminine and neuter gender are to be distinguished with the help of their characteristic signs such as their ring and their glaze. The main image should be made of masculine stone, the pedestal of feminine, while the *piṇḍikā* (lowermost base) of the neuter (*Puṃliṅgaiḥ pratimā kāryā strīliṅgaiḥ pādapīṭhikā* | *Piṇḍikārthaṃ tu sā grāhyā dṛṣṭvā yā ṣaṇḍalakṣaṇā*). This injunction would mean that the above three were made of separate stones; but in most cases, the actual practice was different, the three being made out of one single block of stone. If the stones at the time of being cut and dressed show circular patches inside them, they are to be avoided as far as possible; stones with different kinds of patches (many are enumerated) bring forth various kinds of misfortunes, if they are worked upon. The *Hayaśīrṣa* then goes on to describe the characteristic signs of the *piṇḍikā* and *pīṭha* of the image proper. Elaborate details are given and as many as ten different kinds of the former, such as *sthaṇḍilā*, *yakṣī*, *vedī*, *maṇḍalā*, *pūrṇacandrā*, *vajrā*, *padmā*, *ardhaśaśī* and *trikoṇā* (the name of the tenth is not given), are enumerated. As regards the height of the image and its pedestal, it is expressly laid down here that the shrine door should be divided into

[1] *Kṣārāmlasevitā yā ca nadītirasamudbhavā* | *Puramadhye sthitā yā ca tathāpi tu vane sthitā* || *Catuṣpathe sthitā yā ca mṛcchilāpakkaṇe ca yā* | *Uṣare ca tathā madhye valmīke vāpi yā sthitā* || *Sūryaraśmi-prataptā yā yā ca dagdhā dāvāgninā* | *Anyakarmmopayuktā yā anyadevārthanirmitā* | *Kravyādā-dyairupahatā varjyā yatnena vai śilā* | *Yena kenacid ānītā varjjanīyā tathā śilā* ||

eight equal units; the image proper should measure two of these units, while the *piṇḍikā* should measure one part of the height of the image divided into three equal parts.[1] The *Matsyapurāṇa* distinctly says that all this work connected with the fashioning of the image in all its minute details should be done in a covered secluded place by the image-maker in a pious and well-controlled manner, and while engaged in his work he should always meditate on the god whose image is being fashioned by him.[2] Detailed instructions are incorporated in most of the texts dealing with Brahmanical iconography about the actual proportions to be followed in the carving of the entire image and its various sections and sub-sections; a reference to the details about the canons of iconometry in Chapter VIII of this book where some of these iconometric texts are discussed will testify to the thoroughness and accuracy of the ideal which was set before the ancient and mediæval iconographers of India.

Pictorial representations of divinities were also much in vogue in ancient and mediæval India; this custom still persists in present times, but the background on which the image is now painted mainly consists of paper. When it is found inconvenient and expensive to worship his god in stone, bronze or even clay icons, a sectary would often worship him

[1] *Dvārocchrāyasya yanmānamaṣṭadhā tattu kārayet* | *Bhāgadvayena pratimāṃ tribhāgīkṛtvā tat punaḥ* | *Piṇḍikā bhāgataḥ kāryā nātinīcā na cocchritā.* The distinction between *piṇḍikā* and *pīṭhikā* or *pīṭha* is not very clear; in the text, under *piṇḍikālakṣaṇam*, we are told that the former should measure half the height of the main image in its altitude and be equal in its width to the same of the image—*Ucchrāyaṃ pratimārddhañca dairghyeṇa pratimāsamā.* Then after enumerating the ten different kinds of *piṇḍikās* noted above, the text says down some interesting details in the following lines some of which I quoted from the *Matsyapurāṇa* in a previous chapter:—*Śaile śailamayīṃ piṇḍīṃ pārthive pārthivīṃ tathā* | *Dāruje dārujāṃ kuryānmiśre miśrāṃ tathaiva ca* | *Nānyayonistu kāryā vai sadā śubhaphalepsubhiḥ* | *Arcoāyāmasamaṃ dairghyaṃ liṅgāyāmasamaṃ tathā* | *Yasya devasya yā patnī tāṃ piṭhe parikalpayet*; then it adds, *Evameva samākhyātaṃ samāsāt pīṭhalakṣaṇam.*

[2] *Vivikte saṃvṛte sthāne sthapatiḥ saṃyatendriyaḥ* |
Pūrvavat kāladeśajñaḥ śāstrajñaḥ śuklabhūṣaṇaḥ |
Prayato niyatāhāro devatādhyānatatparaḥ |
Yajamānānukūlena vidvān karma samācaret |

All the quotations from the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* and the *Matsyapurāṇa* are here taken from the 18th *vilāsa* of Gopala Bhatta's *Haribhaktivilāsa.*

in '*ghaṭa*' and '*paṭa*,' *i.e.*, in a water-vessel with vermilion and sandal or other paints on it and in a picture of the deity painted (and nowadays printed) on paper and encased in a wooden frame (this custom is mostly in vogue in Bengal, where it is called in local dialect—'*ghaṭe paṭe pūjā*'). In earlier times, cloth or canvas was the principal medium and the word *paṭa* which originally signified cloth acquired the sense of pictorial representation of a deity or of some mythology connected with it. This is *citra* in a more restricted sense of the term, one of its wider significance being sculpture fully in the round. It is used in the former sense in many of the texts dealing with iconographic matter, and when the *Matsyapurāṇa* refers to the first of the four different kinds of images it undoubtedly uses the word in the former sense. But the scope of these *citrajā* images, as we have seen, is much wider, for it refers to divine images painted not only on cloth but also on walls and vessels (*Paṭe kūḍye ca pātre ca citrajā pratimā smṛtā*). Not only colour drawings on the bare surface of mud walls, but also frescoes that are painted in variegated colour on some kind of plaster fixed to the surface of stone walls as in those of the rock-cut caves of Ajanta are included in this group of icons. The *pātras* are evidently water-vessels, *e.g.*, *ghaṭas* mentioned above, made of clay or metal and these were painted in colour on their outer surface with the figures of divinities. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* gives a detailed account of the rules of painting, which is of unique interest and importance for a thorough appreciation of the great advance that the Indian artists of ancient and mediæval times made in the art of painting.[1]

[1] *Viṣṇudharmottara*, published by the Venkateśvara Press, Book III, chs. 2. 27, 35-43. Translation with introduction and notes by Stella Kramrisch, Calcutta University Press, 1928, pp. 1-20, 31-62. Several emendations of this translation were made by A. K. Coomaraswamy, in *J.A.O.S.*, Vol. 52, 1932, pp. 13-21. The *Citralakṣaṇa*, said to have been composed by Nagnajit, now available only in its Tibetan version, deals extensively with the rules of painting. The *Śilparatna* also has a section which deals with painting. The sections on *Paṭavidhāna* in *Ārya Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (edited by T. Ganapati Sastri, in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series) also contain some useful information on this art; but it is more concerned with the iconographic presentation of the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna divinities. M. Lalou in the work on *Iconographie Der*

The *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* expressly eulogises the pictorial representations of Hari and says that he who paints beautiful *rūpas* of Viṣṇu (on cloth or other objects) enjoys one thousand *yugas* of blissful residence in the Viṣṇuloka ; as Hari is always present in the frescoes (*lepya citra*), so he should always be worshipped in his *lepya citra* forms ; as beauty, ornament, expressions, etc. are clearly discernible in his painted forms, therefore, Janārddana approaches them ; so the sages ordain that hundredfold virtue accrues to the worshippers of the lord in these forms ; seeing Puṇḍarīkākṣa in picture, full of grace and fascinating beauty, one is freed from sin hoarded through untold numbers of births ; therefore, the god Nārāyaṇa should be worshipped in pictures (*paṭa-sthaḥ*) by those who want welfare and religious merit.[1]

A short account may be given here about a peculiar practice of painting divine figures and mythologies associated with them with coloured rice-powder in particular parts of the shrine current even now in different parts of India. In many Vaiṣṇava shrines of Bengal it is still adopted to illustrate the stories connected with the early life of Kṛṣṇa through the medium of differently coloured, but dry, rice-powder. A part of the shrine, generally a section of the *nāṭamaṇḍapa*, is set apart for this purpose ; on a raised flat platform (usually wooden) there, are painted these scenes with great care by the judicious and deft use of this dry powder. This is done at the time of such Vaiṣṇava festivals as Jhulanayātrā, Janmāṣṭamī, Rāsayātrā, etc., and its purpose is mainly decorative and edifying. Such pictorial representation

Etoffes Peintes (*Paṭa*) has translated these chapters in French, given their Tibetan version and written a very useful introduction (Paul Geuthner, Paris, 1930).

[1] *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* in connection with the installation of *citrajā* images, as quoted by Gopala Bhatta : *Yāvanti Viṣṇurūpāṇi surūpāṇīha lekhayet* । *Tāvadyugasahasrāṇi Viṣṇuloke mahīyate* । *Lepye citre Harirnityaṃ sannidhānamupaiti hi* । *Tasmāt sarvaprayatnena lepya-citragataṃ yajet* । *Kāntibhūṣaṇabhāvādyāścitre yasmāt sphuṭaṃ sthitāḥ* । *Ataḥ sānnidhyamāyāti citrajāsu Janārddanaḥ* । *Tasmāccitrārccane puṇyaṃ smṛtaṃ śataguṇaṃ budhaiḥ* । *Citrastha Puṇḍarīkākṣaṃ savilāsaṃ savibhramam* । *Dṛṣṭvā vimucyate pāpairjjanmakoṭīsusañcitaiḥ* । *Tasmācchubhārthibhirdhīrairmahāpuṇya-jigīṣayā* । *Paṭasthaḥ pūjanīyastu devo Nārāyaṇaḥ prabhuḥ* (*Haribhaktivilāsa*, Bengal Edition, 1767 *Śakābdā*, p. 624).

is most probably referred to in the *Śilparatna* as *Dhūlicitra*. *Dhūlicitra* is not the same as *Ālponā* as has been suggested by Kramrisch (cf. *Viṣṇudharmottara*, C.U., 1928, p. 8) ; the latter seems to be referred to by Śrī Kumāra as *Rasacitra*. The author of the *Śilparatna* tells us that there are three kinds of *citras*, *viz.*, *Rasacitra*, *Dhūlicitra* and *citra* (*Rasacitraṃ tathā dhūlicitraṃ citramiti tridhā*). The second in this list is described by him in this manner :—' After powdering separately fire and other colours (methods of preparing different mixed colours such as autumnal green, the colour of elephant, those of *vakula* fruit, fire, water, etc., are first accounted for), a beautiful altar (platform) should be painted temporarily with these powders. The old painters have described this as *Dhūlicitra ;* in it likeness is shown just as reflection appears in a mirror'.[1] It should be noted that Śrī Kumāra here lays stress on the different kinds of colours, but does not explicitly state the nature of the medium with the powder of which these dry colour powders are to be mixed. But that this method of painting was old is distinctly proved by the author's statement that it was described by the old painters.

Reference ought to be made here, for the sake of completeness to various other modes of representing the deity. The Āgamas enumerate several kinds of precious and semi-precious stones like *sphaṭika* (crystal), *padmarāga* (lapis-lazuli), *vajra* (diamond), *vaidūrya* (cat's eye), *vidruma* (coral), *puṣya*(?) and *ratna* (ruby). That crystal could be very skilfully handled and fashioned into beautiful forms is proved by the discovery of the excellently carved crystal bowl with fish handle among the relics of Buddha inside the big monolithic chest at Piprawa. This class of images really falls under the *ratnajā* group of the *Hayaśīrṣa* and the *śastrotkīrṇā* one of the *Matsyapurāṇa*, the latter

[1] *Śilparatna*, Part I, Ch. 46, verses 144-45 :—
Etānyanalavarṇāni cūrṇayitvā pṛthak pṛthak ।
Etaiścūrṇaiḥ sthaṇḍile ramye kṣaṇikāni vilepayet ॥
Dhūlicitramidaṃ khyātaṃ citrakāraiḥ purātanaiḥ ।
Sādṛśyaṃ dṛśyate yattu darpaṇe prativimbavat ॥

also including images made of wood and stone. To the *śastrotkīrṇā* class will also belong those metal plaques, of gold and other metals, which bear on them the effigies of gods. Mention has already been made of the Lauriya Nandangarh and Piprawa gold plaques bearing the representations of a nude goddess; among the several other tiny gold leaves discovered inside the big relic casket at Piprawa, a few other figures in outline—an elephant, a crude human figure, etc.,—can still be recognised, though their character cannot be determined with certainty. The unique representation of Śiva-Pārvatī embossed on a concave plaque of pure gold, 2½ inches high, found on the site of the Patna fort, if it is genuine, is one of the most interesting finds of this nature.[1] Metal plaques containing the figures of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu and his incarnations, described by some scholars as Viṣṇupaṭṭas (these were also made of stone), as also of various other divinities are to be grouped along with the above. There was not much of technical nicety and elaboration that was wanted in the fashioning of such objects of worship, and the texts are usually silent about the methods of their manufacture. The same remark cannot be made with regard to the ornamental stone ring and stone discs of the Maurya-Śuṅga period described in Chapter V, which also fall under the *śastrotkīrṇā* class. They undoubtedly testify to the excellence of the technical skill of the unknown carvers of these objects, who seem to have belonged to the finest class of lapidaries of ancient times. As regards the *ratnajā* class of images, little or no details about their manufacturing

[1] K. P. Jayaswal, 'Pataliputra Śiva-Pārvatī Gold Plaque' in *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. II, 1934, p. 1. Jayaswal writes: 'Below the *jaṭā* knot of the male figure, there is a crescent-like band. Its left hand touches the bosom of the female figure. It is undoubtedly a figure of Śiva-Pārvatī. The figures are not nimbate; the style of the female figure is that of the Didarganj Yakṣī and that of the male figure of the Patna statues. The absence of nimbus and general treatment assign it to the Maurya or Pre-Maurya times.' If this dating is accepted, then it becomes the earliest joint representation of these two deities in the historic period, the second in point of date being that on the coins of Huvishka, noted in a previous chapter; but it is doubtful whether it can be dated so early. The Didarganj Yakṣī has been assigned by Marshall to as late a date as the 1st century B.C. or later, in his latest work, *viz.*, *Monuments of Sanchi*. It is also to be noted that there are grave doubts about the genuineness of the gold plaque.

technique are to be found in the general body of the iconographic literature for the obvious reason that these images, being expensive ones, were seldom in demand by the common class of devotees, and even when a few wealthy ones were in need of them, the highly skilled jewellers and ivory-carvers of ancient and mediaeval India were never handicapped for lack of instructions in meeting their wants.

Cast images have been placed by me under the *pākajā* class; another class of images which can also very well come under the same are the terracotta figurines that have been discovered in untold numbers from various parts of India with dates ranging from the remotest times onwards. Some of them have undoubtedly a cult significance, while others are children's toys; numerous others, again, are clay seals which were stamped with the particular signs of royalties, court officials, trade-guilds, religious establishments and others, and lightly burnt afterwards. The last group sometimes bore on their surface the various Brahmanic deities and their emblems which were certainly based on the contemporary mode of their representation. Terracotta plaques bearing figures of cult-deities and mythological stories associated with them were very frequently used in Bengal and many other parts of India as outer decorations of *stūpas*, *vihāras* and temples for the edification of pious sectarian devotees. These were comparatively cheap and easily available, and so the potters' art was extensively patronised by the sectaries. Attention has already been drawn to the terracotta objects described by Mackay as images of gods in the Indus Valley sites; Mackay expressly tells us that the numerousness of such finds shows that they were manufactured in the factories of image-makers of these regions. Excavations in the historic sites of Vaiśālī, Bhita, Śrāvastī, Kauśāmbī, Somapur (Pāhārpur), Puṇḍravarddhana (Mahāsthān), Banaras, Patna, Nalanda, etc., have brought to light large numbers of the terracotta objects belonging to the different categories noticed above, and some of them are particularly useful for the study of Hindu iconography. Thus the diverse representations of a nude female

figure in burnt clay, dating from a few centuries before the Christian era, have been taken by Coomaraswamy to stand for the mother goddess whose cult seems to have been much in vogue not only among the original settlers of India, later finding a wider currency there, but also in the countries of the near East and eastern Mediterranean. As regards the seal impressions, reference has already been made in Chapter V to those found at Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Basarh, Bhita, Rajghat, Nalanda, etc., which are of unique interest and importance for the study of Hindu iconography. It has often been said that these were ordinary clay objects which were either sunburnt or burnt in kilns after they had received the impression of the device from the seal matrix, the negative of the plaques, and such other moulds. But it is possible that some sort of preparation was necessary for the ordinary clay and a few other ingredients had to be mixed with it. I have already referred to the formula laid down in the *Hayaśīrṣa* for preparing clay for image-making; but this was not ordinary clay, but some kind of stucco, and when the image was made out of it, it was not burnt. Brief reference has also been made by me to the clay compound which was used in the casting of metal images as written in the *Mānasollāsa*; it may be mentioned now in detail. 'To clay should be added charred husk finely rubbed, cotton severed a hundred times and a little salt finely powdered. All these (when mixed with clay) should be finely ground on a smooth stone.'[1] The *Śilparatna*

[1] Saraswati's translation of the original which runs thus: *Masīṃ tuṣamayiṃ ghṛṣṭvā kārpāsaṃ śataśaḥ kṣatam | Lavanaṃ cūrṇitaṃ ślakṣṇaṃ svalpaṃ saṃyojayenmṛdā | Peṣayet sarvamekatra suślakṣṇe ca śilātale.* Evidently this compound was also used in the making of the crucible in which the metal lump was melted on fire. The *Śilparatna* (Pt. II, p. 11) refers to five kinds of clay compounds with their constituents, used in metal casting, in these lines:—*Kaṭhinā mandakaṭhinā mṛdvī mṛdutarā tathā | Mūṣākaraṇayogyeti pañcadhā mṛttikā smṛtā || Pūrvoktāṃ nākujāṃ vātha mṛtsnāmādāya yatnataḥ | Mṛlloṣṭacūrṇasaṃyuktāṃ yathāyukti vimardayet || Śuddhāmbhasā pūgacarmasāraṃ yuktyā suyojayet | Kārayet kaṭhināmevaṃ śikāmuṣalatāḍitām || Tasmin gomayasaṃyukte syānmandakaṭhinā punaḥ | Mṛdbhāṇḍacūrṇasaṃyuktāṃ tatpādāṃśakamṛttikām|| Peṣaṇyāṃ peṣayed yāṃ sā mṛdvīti kathitā purā | Tadeva gomayayutā mṛtsnā mṛdutarā smṛtā || Tuṣādyaṅgāracūrṇena saṃyuktā ghaṭamṛttikā | Kārpāsapaṭacūrṇena samaṃ musalapīḍitā | Eṣā mūṣāmṛdākhyātā kartavyā sānayā dṛḍham | Yatkiñcidīpsitaṃ tantu kiñcinnyūnapramāṇataḥ.* It can be summed up in English as follows: The five kinds of clay compounds are: *kaṭhinā* (hard), *manda-kaṭhinā* (medium-hard), *mṛdvī* (soft), *mṛdutarā* (softer) and *mūṣākaraṇayogyā* (clay fit for making crucibles); the first is made of ordinary clay or that from ant-hills (*nākujā*) thoroughly mixed with finely powdered brick-dust, pure water and extracts of betel-nut husks (*pūgacarmasāra*); when the above compound is mixed up with cowdung, it constitutes the second variety; finely powdered dust of earthen pots mixed with clay in proportion of one to four makes up the third, while cowdung added to the same, the fourth; lastly, the fifth is made by mixing charred husk, earthen pot dust and desiccated cotton cloth all in equal proportions and all finely powdered. It will be seen that the fifth compound is more or less the same as that given in the *Mānasollāsa*.

refers, in connection with making of terracotta *liṅgas* (*pakvaliṅgas*), to the mode of preparing the clay which has special bearing on this question. It says: good earth fit for use should be procured and well ground; then it should be left over for a month in *pañcagavya* (*i.e.*, milk, milk-curd, clarified butter, urine and dung of the cow) and afterwards burnt in fire.[1]

T. A. G. Rao mentions, on the basis of an unnamed śilpa text, brick, *kaḍi-śarkarā* and *danta* (ivory) as a few other materials which were used for making images. The main ingredient in the preparation of *kaḍi-śarkarā*, according to him, is limestone, the others are not named by him; I shall not be surprised if the compound be something like the other described by me on the basis of the *Hayaśīrṣa* as quoted by Gopala Bhatta, in which, as we saw, powdered limestone was one of the main constituents. The text there refers to

[1] *Śilparatna*, T. Ganapati Sastri's Edition, Pt. II, p. 6, verses 49-50: *Athavā kevalāṃ mṛtsnāṃ karmayogyāṃ vicūrṇitām | Marditāṃ pañcagavyādbhirmāsamātraṃ tathoṣitām || Gṛhītvā kārayelliṅgaṃ sapīṭhaṃ tviṣṭamānataḥ | Vipacet kuśalairagnau pakvaliṅgaṃ tu tad bhavet.* The other clay compound which is mentioned in the same text (Pt. II, pp. 5-6, vv. 44-8) for making durable clay images (without being burnt) differs from the one mentioned in the *Hayaśīrśa* inasmuch as it mentions four different kinds of clay, *viz.*, white, red, yellow and black; among the other ingredients are grains of barley, wheat, a kind of pulse (*māṣa*), *bdellium* (*guggula*) and extracts of lac, pumpkin, *syāma*, *kundurikṣa*(?), *pañcagavya*, oil, etc. In this there is no mention of powdered iron, stone and sand; this seems to be the real clay compound and not the stucco-like substance mentioned in the other text. The method of manufacture was—*Tāṃ mṛdāṃ marditāṃ pakṣaṃ māsamātroṣitāṃ punaḥ | Gṛhītvā kārayelliṅgaṃ sapīṭhaṃ lakṣaṇānvitam | Māsaṃ tu śoṣayed gharme vimvamāmaṃ tu mārttikam; i.e.*, the clay should be kneaded for about a fortnight and left over for a month; after that *liṅga* with the *pīṭha* and its characteristic signs should be made out of it; then the *liṅga* with its *pīṭha* should be dried for a month in the sun; this image is sunbaked. (*āmaṃ, i.e.*, not burnt).

karkarā as another of the materials, and *karkarā* and *śarkarā* denote the same thing, *viz.*, little stone-chips, perhaps lime-stone chips; the *Śabdakalpadruma* records that *karkaram* means *cūrṇajanakakṣudra-pāṣāṇa-khaṇḍam, kāñkara ghuṭiṃ iti bhāṣā*. *Śarkarā* also is explained in Sanskrit-English lexicons as ' a pebble ', ' gravel ' and ' small stone '. Rao further informs us, ' Brick and mortar or *kaḍi-śarkarā* images are also occasionally met with in several temples; in the famous temples at Śrīraṅgam and Trivandrum (Anantaśayanam), the main central images are understood to be of this kind '[1] As regards brick and mortar images, the same author refers to one such image of Mahā-sadāśivamūrti found by him in Vaittīśvarankoyil (Tanjore District). This image corresponds to the textual description (as given in the *Mānasāra*) that this form should have fifty arms and twenty-five faces—each of the five aspects of Śiva (Vāmadeva, Sadyojāta, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna) being represented by five faces. 'The heads are arranged in tiers in arithmetical progression—thus the topmost tier has only one head, the next one below has three, the next five and so on till the last tier has nine heads.' [2]

The above presentation of the manufacturing technique followed by the iconoplastic artists of India will show how great was the demand for the cult images, as also their emblems and accessories throughout India of the post-Christian period. The services of the wood-carver, the potter, the stone-mason, the painter, the jeweller, and the metal-caster were utilized by the numerous religious-minded people of India in greater or lesser degrees. In fact, the divine images and their worship had come to be the most potent factor in the lives of the majority of the Indians as the simplest manifestation of the inner religious experience as inculcated in *bhakti*. Some of the intellectual thinkers,

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 49.

[2] T. A. G. Rao, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 374, Pl. CXIV, fig. 2. Reference may be made *in passim* to the similar arrangement of heads of the multi-headed Avalokiteśvara figures belonging to the Vajrayāna pantheon of Tibet and Nepal. One such eleven-headed standing figure has been illustrated by Grünwedel in his *Buddhist Art*, p. 203, fig. 148.

as we have seen in a previous chapter, were not much in love with this religious practice, but they could not ignore it altogether and, however grudgingly, allowed it a place of importance in their works. Texts refer, often in a curious manner, to this acceptance when they say that the gods were visible to men in the *satya*, *tretā* and *dvāpara yugas*, but that with the advent of *kali* they are not so and they are now to be found in their images.[1] The *Viṣṇudharmottara* tells us that the gods were worshipped in their visible forms, not images, in the *satya yuga;* in the *tretā* and *dvāpara yugas*, worship was done both in their visible forms and in their images. In the *tretā yuga* they were worshipped in the house and in the *dvāpara* in the forest; in the *kali yuga*, however, the practice of building houses of gods (*i.e.*, temples) in town was begun. The enshrinement of the gods (*i.e.*, their images) should be done in land suitable for such purpose, which should be donated according to the rules followed in gifts of lands. The above is a free translation of the following :—'*Satyayuge devānāṃ pratyakṣapūjanaṃ—tretādvāparayoḥ pratyakṣapūjā pratimāsu ca—tatrāpi tretāyuge gṛhe dvāpare cāraṇye—kalau ca devāyatananirmitirnagareṣu samārabdhā, bhūmidānaṃ ridhāyaiva devāyatanapratiṣṭhā kāryā, devālayayogyabhūmi* (a summary of Vv. 1-9 of *Viṣṇudharmottara*, Bk. III, Ch. 93).

Several factors will have to be taken into consideration which collectively contributed to the phenomenal rise to importance of this practice and the consequent development of the icono-plastic art in its various phases. The first and foremost of them was undoubtedly the wide prevalence of sectarianism in India in the centuries of the Christian era which was ever becoming more and more important and all-embracing. The Indians came to be gradually divided into a multiple number of sects, and if we leave aside the Buddhists and the Jains, and their various sub-sects, which were heterodox from the Brahmanical point of view, there were still the five stereotyped sectaries—the followers

[1] *Kṛtatretādvāpareṣu narāḥ paśyanti devatāḥ |*
Tiṣyaṃ prāpya na paśyanti pūjāstvarccāgatā yataḥ ||

and worshippers of the Pañcadevatās, *viz.*, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, Sūrya and Gaṇapati. Over and above these five well-known principal sectaries, there were numbers of others which had grown up and had found their particular places under the ever-expanding shelter of composite Hinduism In the chapter on the installation of images, Varāhamihira gives a list of several sects which had been flourishing for a long time before his work was composed. He says that the images of Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Śambhu (Śiva), Mātṛgaṇas, Brahmā, Buddha and the Jinas should be duly consecrated and installed by the Bhāgavatas, the Magas, the ash-besmeared twice-born ones (*i.e.*, the Pāśupatas), those well acquainted with the *pūjā* of the Mātṛgaṇas, the Brahmans versed in the Vedic lore, the Śākyas and the unclad ones respectively, according to the rites peculiar to the worship of the individual gods.[1] The list may not be an exhaustive one but is highly

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, S. Dvivedi's Edition, Ch. 59, V. 19.
Viṣṇorbhāgavatān magāṃśca savituḥ śambhoḥ sabhasmadvijān ।
Mātṛṇāmapi maṇḍalakramavido viprān vidurbrahmaṇaḥ ॥
Śākyān sarvahitasya śāntamanaso nagnān jinānāṃ vidu- ।
Rye yaṃ devamupāśritāḥ svavidhinā taistasya kāryā kriyā ॥

Utpala elaborately comments on the above; a part of his commentary is quoted here for the better understanding of the text :—

Dvijān brāhmaṇān sabhasmān bhasma-sahitān pāśupatānityarthaḥ । *Mātṛṇāṃ Brāhmyādīnāṃ (sapta mātṛikāḥ) maṇḍalakramavido ye maṇḍalakramaṃ pūjākramaṃ vidanti jānanti* ।.....*Sarvahitasya Buddhasya śāntamanaso jitendriyasya śākyān raktapaṭān viduḥ* (it seems the Bauddhas in Utpala's time used to wear red robes); *Jinānāmarhatāṃ nagnān nagnakṣapaṇakān viduḥ*. The last part of the commentary is very interesting : *Ye narā yaṃ devamupāśritāḥ śaraṇyaṃ bhaktibhāvena prāptāstairnaraistasya devasya svavidhinā ātmīyadarśanoktena vidhānena* । *Pāñcarātravidhinā Viṣṇoḥ* । *Sauradarśanavidhānena Savituḥ* । *Vātulatantroktenānyatantroktavidhinā vā Śambhoḥ* । *Mātṛṇāṃ svakalpavihitavidhānena Brāhmaṇairvedavihitakarmaṇā (Brahmaṇo Veda.....?) Buddhasya pāramitākrameṇa* । *Arhatāṃ taddarśanavidhinā kriyā kāryā iti.*

It can be freely translated thus :—' The installation of different divinities who are worshipped by different groups of people with *bhakti* should be done according to their respective tenets; thus, the images of Viṣṇu should be installed according to the *Pāñcarātra*, those of Sūrya according to the Saura, those of Śiva according to the rites mentioned in the *Vātulatantra*, the images of the Mātṛgaṇas, according to their individual tenets, that of Brahmā according to Vedic rites, of Buddha according to the Pāramitā rules, of the Arhats (Jinas) according to their own system. The *Vātulatantra* evidently refers to some such *śāstra* of the Pāśupatas as the *Pāśupatasūtras*, according to which, the means or doors for the attainment of the highest powers by them are such apparently insane acts as *krāthana* ('affecting to be asleep when one is awake'), *spandana* ('shaking the limbs as if they

significant; the Gāṇapatyas as a sect are not included here. and it is presumable that though the worship of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka was in vogue from a time much earlier, still the sect of his exclusive worshippers had yet to be organised. The Iranian element in the worship of the sun especially in northern India had been long acclimatised; the Bhāgavata (known also as the Pāñcarātra) and the Pāśupata were still the authorised names of the sects centering respectively round Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu and Rudra-Śiva ; the worship of the Mātṛgaṇas (the Saptamātṛikāḥ) was the chief manifestation of the Śakti cult. The Vedic section of the Indians had even not given up their efforts for the inclusion of Prajāpati-Brahmā, the Vedic-Brāhmaṇic god *par excellence*, as one of the sectarian divinities, though we know they were fighting for a losing cause; eighth century sculptures in illustration of the mythology of Śiva's curse on Brahmā for his immorality (falsehood—*cf.* the Ellora Liṅgodbhavamūrti of Śiva) show that Brahmā had no chance against his powerful and virile rivals like Śiva and Viṣṇu. There can be no doubt about the existence of feelings of jealousy and rivalry among these sectaries, though, as we have shown in the first chapter, this ill-feeling and bitterness might not have been as keen and destructive as in the countries of Europe, long after this period; still the feelings of rivalry were there and helped to create new iconic forms for the edification of and worship by the individual sectaries. I have already drawn attention to the particular type of the Śaiva image known as Śarabha which was a direct counterpart of the Vaiṣṇava one, Narasiṃha, itself pre-eminently sectarian in character. Our attention to this particular type was first drawn by T. A. G. Rao who also emphasised the nature of the Trimūrti icons of southern India in which Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu is the central figure with Brahmā and Śiva half-issuing from his either side with their

were paralysed') *maṇḍana* ('walking as if one's legs and other limbs were disabled'), *śṛṅgāraṇa* ('showing oneself to be in love by means of amorous gestures as if on seeing a beautiful woman'), *avitatkaraṇa* ('doing a thing condemned by all as if one were devoid of the sense of discrimination'), *avitadbhāṣaṇa* ('speaking nonsensical and absurd things ').

hands in the *añjali* pose. It is not a simple presentation of the later Brahmanical triad Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, but is a direct sectarian rejoinder to a type of Śiva image known as Ekapādamūrti. The latter represents Śiva standing on one leg (this type evidently based on the Vedic Aja Ekapāda described in the epic texts both as one of the eleven Rudras and an epithet of Śiva), the figures of Viṣṇu and Brahmā projecting from his left and right sides respectively, with their front hands in the *añjali* pose. Rao remarks, 'In opposition evidently to this Śaiva view, and with an equally strong Paurāṇic authority on their side, the Vaiṣṇavas have similarly represented the Supreme God as Viṣṇu with Brahmā and Śiva proceeding from him.' [1] Many of the mythological stories connected with one or other of these sects have this bias underlying them and reliefs in illustration thereof were carved in large numbers and put into prominent parts of the temples where icons of the different sectarian divinities were worshipped. Rao has noted in the same connection, that 'often in the Purāṇas, Śiva is said to have paid homage to Viṣṇu and equally often is Viṣṇu said to have paid homage to Śiva.' The presence of sectarian bias in the origin of these myths and in the manufacture of sculptures thereof is undoubted, and a study of such stories and reliefs, connected with Viṣṇvanugraha or Cakradānamūrti of Śiva, Viṣṇu offering redemption of Śiva from the sin of Brahmahatyā for the Brahmaśiraśchedaka aspect of the latter, the Dāśarathi Rāma and Jāmadagnya Rāma *avatāras* of Viṣṇu (the last also basically illustrates in a way the struggle between the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas), etc., will fully prove the hypothesis. Rao thinks that the fanciful rendering of the Tamil name Kacchiyappa, meaning the lord of Kacchi (Tamil for Kāñcīpura—Conjeevaram), has given rise to a new god and his image, *viz.*, Kacchapeśvara where Viṣṇu in his tortoise incarnation is seen bathing a Śivaliṅga (*ibid.*, pp. 42-3, pl. D.). But in this we do not find the creation of a new god

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., Introduction, p. 45, pl. F; for the Śarabha image and Rao's remarks on it, see *ibid.*, p. 44, pl. E.

or a new image, but a novel presentation of a theme, in which also sectarian prejudice is clearly discernible, by a Śaiva devotee who took advantage of the phonetic similarity between Tamil *Kacchiyappa* and Sanskrit *Kacchapa* (the latter meaning a 'tortoise'). Rao has not noticed the other class of images which show definite efforts towards a rapprochement between the different sects. I have already referred to several of them, in which this tendency is clearly present, in the introductory chapter of this work, and such images as Hari-Hara, Dattātreya (Hari-Hara-Pitāmaha), Arddhanārīśvara, etc. are evidently of this class.

The phenomenal increase in the number of divinities comprising the Brahmanic pantheon, which were highly venerated by the different sectaries, necessitated the construction of sculptures for representing one or other of them. The Vedic Indo-Aryans believed in multiple gods; an attempt is made in many of the early and late Vedic texts to fix the aggregate of thirty-three gods divided in one list into three groups of eleven each, one connected with heaven, the second with earth and the third with waters or sometimes with the *antarīkṣa* region equated with the last. But this number is never strictly adhered to, and Yāska's enumeration of three orders based on the above, *viz.*, *pṛthivīsthāna*, *antarīkṣa-sthāna* or *madhyamasthāna* and *dyusthāna*, centering round three principal deities, *viz.*, Agni on earth, Vāyu or Indra in air and Sūrya in heaven, contains a number of minor deities and deified objects which far exceeded the stereotyped list. It may be argued that as these gods were not iconically represented, the question of their number does not arise at all. But many were the Vedic divinities who came to be intimately associated with one or other of the later cult-deities and lent their characteristic traits to the latter in their multifarious iconic representations. An epithet, which served to emphasise one particular trait of a Vedic god, later gave rise to the composition of an elaborate story for emphasising that trait of the same deity in his Purāṇic setting, and reliefs illustrating it were constructed in large numbers. To refer to one particular instance: Rudra in the Vedas,

especially in the *Śatarudrīya* section, is given an epithet called *kṛttivāsa* which means one that has a skin for his garment. Now, there can be little doubt that here was the nucleus of the elaborate story of Gajāsurasaṃhāramūrti in illustration whereof so many images of Śiva, in which he is shown as using the hide of the slain elephant-demon as his outer covering, were made. In the Vājasaneyī recension of the *White Yajurveda* (III. 63), Rudra the fearful is described as *Śiva*, thus, 'Thou art gracious by name; the thunderbolt is thy father; reverence to thee; destroy us not' (*Śivo nāmāsi svadhitiste pitā namaste astu mā mā hiṃsīḥ*). In the *Ṛgveda*, Rudra is described as *kṣayad-vīra*, generally explained by scholars as the ruler over heroes, and wise, his terrific aspect being also much emphasised; thus the hymnist prays to the god, 'Oh Rudra, do not, out of thy anger, injure our children and descendants, our people, our cattle, our houses, and do not kill our men, we invoke thee always with offerings' (I. 114, 8—*Mā nastoke tanaye mā na āyau mā no goṣu mā no aśveṣu rīriṣaḥ* l *Vīrān mā no Rudro bhāmito badhīr haviṣmantaḥ sadamit tvā havāmahe*). In the *Mahābhārata* (Anuśāsana Parvan), Kṛṣṇa praises the god before Yudhiṣṭhira thus, 'Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas know two bodies of this god, one awful, one auspicious; and these two bodies again have many forms' (*Dve tanū tasya devasya vedajñāḥ brāhmaṇāḥ vidūḥ* l *Ghorām anyāṃ śivām anyāṃ te tanū bahudhā punaḥ*). Now, this idea is consistently given expression to in many of the multifarious reliefs of Śiva where the great god is depicted as the destroyer (*cf.* his so many Saṃhāramurtis), or as the bestower of favour (*cf.* his multifarious Anugrahamūrtis). Víṣṇu in the early Vedic texts is simply mentioned as Trivikrama and is often extolled there for his feat of having taken three strides and thus covering the whole universe (*tredhā nidadhe padam*). Subsequently, elaborate mythology grew up round this, and interesting sculptures in illustration thereof were made, which were classed as the transformed phase of his Vāmana incarnation. It will be needless to multiply instances here, as this aspect of iconic representations of the Brahmanical

gods will be discussed later in this book. But one point should always be borne in mind, *viz.*, that the purpose of these reliefs and sculptures in many cases was decorative and subsidiary; thus, it being the general order to enshrine the Liṅga of Śiva as the principal cult object in the main sanctum of Śaiva shrines, many of the mythological stories connected with him were plastically represented and used as so many accessories for the edification of the devotees in the different parts of the same. But, in the case of Viṣṇuite icons, the same iconic motif, which could in one place serve as a Pārśvadevatā (*i.e.*, a deity serving as an accessory and placed in a side-niche of the main sanctum), could in another shrine be the principal object of worship. Thus, the Śeṣaśayanamūrti of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa—that again a mythological elaboration of the *Ṛgveda*, X. 82, 5 and 6—is used in one of the three niches of the Deogarh temple (Lalitpur subdivision, Jhansi district); but in most of the South Indian Vaiṣṇava shrines, the chief icon in the main sanctum is Raṅganātha which is one of the names of the above type of Viṣṇu images in South India.

Many divinities, again, were new entrants into the orthodox hierarchy; they must have existed in some form or other as objects of veneration of particular classes of people, but they could not but be recognised by the orthodox thinkers and given the stamp of this recognition in various ways. The Brahmans also incorporated in a very interesting manner the principal deities associated with other cults into their ever-increasing pantheon. Thus, Buddha and Ṛṣabha, the two principal gods of the rival sects, were recognised by the Viṣṇuites as so many *avatāras* of Viṣṇu; *Viṣṇupurāṇa* glibly suggested that Viṣṇu incarnated himself as Buddha to delude the *asuras* with false doctrines and thus destroy them. Further, particular doctrinal tenets of a cult had to be emphasised and represented in concrete forms for the benefit of the sectarian devotees; thus, the Twenty-four Forms of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu (*Caturviṃśatimūrttayaḥ*) and the Pañcabrahmā forms of Śiva (*Īśānādayaḥ*) are really meant to represent in a concrete manner some of the cardinal tenets of

the Pāñcarātra and Śaiva systems, *viz.*, those centering round the *Vyūhavāda* and Śiva's five *śaktis* (*Ādiśakti, Parāśakti, Icchāśakti, Jñānaśakti* and *Kriyāśakti*), respectively. Innumerable icons were made in illustration of the above, and this gave a great impetus to the activities of the icon-makers of India.

Another important factor which contributed to the development of iconographers' art in this country was undoubtedly her contact with the foreigners, especially with the Greeks in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era. The exact character of the influence which was exercised by the Greeks on the cultural activities of this country has been a much-debated question, and controversy has been specially keen regarding the indebtedness of the Indians to the Hellenistic Greeks for their own icon-making art. Discussions concerning the latter generally centred round the problem about the origin of the Buddha image, and incidentally the wider aspect of it, *viz.*, the iconical representation of the cult-gods and worshipping them through those media, was brought in. It is not necessary here to refer at length to different views of well-known scholars about the above; it will be sufficient to observe, however, that, though images were made and worshipped in certain places in ancient India,—for which we have cited numbers of early texts in the second and third chapters of this book, the image-making activity of the early Indians received a new impetus after they came in contact with the Greeks. Images used to be made of the *Vyantara* or intermediate divinities, really the objects of worship among the general mass of the people and the previous settlers of India, and therein lay the root cause of the recognition of this practice by the higher section of the people ; but that one of the prime factors contributing to its development was the example set up by the Hellenistic Greeks of Gandhāra can be fully demonstrated with the help of the coins. It has been shown in the previous chapter that Śiva was being worshipped in Gandhāra in his bull form at the time the region was being ruled over by the Bactrian Greeks ; shortly

afterwards, during the rule of the Indo-Parthians and the Kushans, the god began to be anthropomorphically represented, though his theriomorphic form was not altogether forgotten. Now, this human as well as animal representation of Śiva was certainly not unknown in different parts of central and northern India, as is proved by the coins of much earlier times. In fact, the Hellenistic die-cutters must have made themselves familiar with the staff- and water-vessel-carrying Śiva figures of the latter and utilised this iconographic knowledge in giving shape to the Gandhāra Śivas. But, the plastic treatment and new orientation they gave to them on the coins show the nature and extent of the transformation of the theme. This is the reason why several scholars were sceptic about identifying Śiva on the reverse side of some coins of Gondophares and why the treatment of this deity on some of the tribal and Kushan coins forcibly reminds us of a Herakles of the Indo-Greek and the Indo-Scythic coins. The striking figure of Viśvāmitra, really Śiva as Viśvāmitra, on the obverse of certain biscriptual silver coins of Dharaghoṣa cannot but convince us of the truth of the above remark ; there is some thing, it is true, that is Indian in the iconography of the figure, but much there is also in its whole presentation that is Hellenistic in character. Cunningham characteristically describes it thus, 'Śiva, standing to front with right hand raised to head, and leopard's skin over left arm; similar to figure of Herakles crowning himself' (*CAI.*, p. 67) ; the very style and treatment of the whole coin itself is Hellenistic, and a comparison can profitably be made between the Śiva figures on indigenous coins of Ujjayinī in Central India with this Viśvāmitra-Śiva type on the coins hailing from an area roughly corresponding to 'the valley of the Beas, or perhaps the wider region between the Upper Sutlej and the Ravi.' A comparison can also be profitably made between the figure of Hermes used as a device on some coins of Azes I and the Śiva figure appearing on some coins of Maues. The scarf displayed on the upper half of Hermes' body, his standing posture, his extended right hand, the

manner of his holding the caduceus (a wand intertwined with snakes)—all these features are very much similar to those characteristic of Śiva on Maues' coin and the Sirkap seal already noted. A contrast made between the iconographic presentation of two other gods, *viz.*, Indra and Sūrya, on early indigenous coins and their figures on the Indo-Greek and Kushan coins will enable us further to substantiate our hypothesis. Reference has been made to the figure of Indra enshrined on the coins of Indramitra in the Pañcāla series; the same deity appears veritably in the garb of a Zeus on the coins of Eukratides and a number of Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythic rulers of the extreme north-west of India. Nay, there is no doubt that in this region, Indra used also to be represented in his elephant form as has been shown in a previous chapter; but a Zeus type could very conveniently be utilised to represent the god who was the city-deity of Kapiśa. In the numerous sculptural representations of the same god in Gandhāra, however, he appears in the rôle of a worshipping attendant of Buddha, but still the type reproduced there is in striking contrast to another indigenous one presented by the figure of the same god in the Bhaja façade. As regards Sūrya figures on early indigenous coins, we have seen what was their mode of representation; the Indians were quite justified in reproducing him as he is visible to all (*pratyakṣa*), but they also represented him in human form as the Bhaja, Udayagiri and Bodh Gaya reliefs show.[1] But the type of the north-Indian Sūrya image which came to be regularly worshipped by the Sauras was certainly stylistically connected with the one so often represented on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka. The association of the latter with the Hellenistic Sun-God as also many other matters concerning the former will be treated in Chapter X of this book. But it will be sufficient to note here that in this case a very striking example is produced to show how some of the plastic features of an image type, that survived till a very late period, were undoubtedly influenced by their

[1] E. H. Johnston, however, identified the Bhaja Sūrya and Indra as Indra and Māra respectively; *J.I.S.O.A.*, VII, 1939, pp. 1-7, pls. i and ii. The present writer has criticised his views in *J.I.S.O.A.*, XVI, 1948, pp. 54-5.

Hellenistic counterparts. This was the nature and extent of the contribution that was made by this art of north-western region—and in fact, it was at its apogee during the rule of the Kushan emperors—to the development of iconoplastic art in India. The themes were in most cases Indian, but the technique of presentation of some varieties of them at least was greatly influenced by these alien motifs. Even when the former was in a decadent stage, as is proved by the stone sculptures of the third and fourth centuries A.D. in the north-west (but the art was still flourishing in stucco as has so ably been demonstrated by Marshall), the Ardochso type of the late Kushan coins (*cf.* those represented on those of Vāsu Kushan) could influence the Lakṣmī type on those of the early imperial Guptas; but the latter, undoubtedly far more cultured than the late Kushans, soon gave it a character which was far nobler and more artistic than the crude schematic figure, its prototype.

The evolution of the tantras and the gradual canonisation of the modes for icon-making were also important factors conducive to the development of Indian icono-plastic art. Mention has already been made, in the first chapter, of the Pāñcarātra, Śaiva and Śākta *saṃhitās*, *āgamas* and *tantras* incorporating elaborate instructions for the use of the temple-builder and the image-maker. It would be doing an injustice to the compilers of these practical guidances actually based on the experience of generations of artists, if we remark that 'the most potent cause that injuriously affected Indian iconoplastic art is the hard and fast rules laid down in the Āgamas and the Tantras for the making of images' (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., Introduction, p. 31). It is like suggesting that the canonisation of the rules of speech and writing would adversely affect the language of a people. In the hands of an expert worker these rules, even if they were meticulously followed, would, instead of being so many impediments, serve as useful guides. The far-famed artists of Hellas had also certain stereotyped canons before them which were really derived from the works of the early masters. Greek sculptors closely followed these canons, and we have statues of

various schools which are distinguished by fixed proportions of limbs, such as the Old Attic, Old Argive, Polyclitan, Argive-Sicyonian or Lysippan, etc. "An oft-quoted saying of Polyclitus is to this effect that, 'successful attainment in art is the result of minute accuracy in a multitude of arithmetical proportions.....' Polyclitus not only published his theory of sculpture in a work called 'The Canon,' but also having taught in that treatise all the proportions of the body, carried his theory into practice by constructing a statue according to the prescriptions in the treatise."[1] That is the attitude of the compilers of these Indian iconographic and iconometric texts, which is summed up in a very characteristic manner by the author of the *Śukranītisāra*. He writes: That image is called beautiful which is neither in excess of correct proportions nor short of them..... The limbs of those images which have been praised by sages (*i.e.*, experts in iconography) never exceed or fall short of the correct proportions and thus are to be regarded as beautiful. All the limbs that are neither too fat nor too lean are pleasing from all points of view. One in one hundred thousand images is excellent in all its parts; so that image which is so according to the śāstric proportions is really beautiful, others are not. Those images which go against the above are not good to the sages.'[2] In this view of the case, Rao's statement about the 'handicap of the artist' and about his 'losing freedom of action' requires modification. The icons no doubt became to

[1] E. A. Gardner, *Six Greek Sculptors*, pp. 118 and 120.

[2] *Śukranītisāra*, IV. 4. 210-216 :—*Mānato nādhikaṃ hīnaṃ tadvimbaṃ ramyamucyate* | *Tadvijñaiḥ prastutā ye ye mūrtteravayavāḥ sadā* | *Na hīnā nādhikā mānāt te te jñeyāḥ suśobhanāḥ* || *Na sthūlā na kṛsā vāpi sarve sarvamanoramāḥ* | *Sarvāṅgaiḥ sarvaramyo hi kaścillakṣe prajāyate* | *Śāstramānena yo ramyaḥ sa ramyo nānya eva hi.* But the author was also aware of the existence of a certain class of opinion according to which 'that image is beautiful in which one's heart is attached'—*Ekeṣāmeva tadramyaṃ lagnaṃ yatra ca yasya hṛt.* It is not clear, however, whether in this statement the author refers to his own appreciation of his work by the icon-maker or it simply means that whatever may be its execution, the image is beautiful, if the heart of one (*i.e.*, its devotee) is attached to it. If the latter is meant, then it signifies that the beauty of the image depends on the *bhakti* of its worshipper. The author's express observation is that as very few are the images which are really beautiful in all their limbs, it will be better if the image-maker follows strictly the authorised canons of proportions.

a certain extent stereotyped; but it should never be forgotten that they were not being made for art connoisseurs' criticism, their primary purpose being to serve as so many aids to the religious efforts (*sādhanā*) of the innumerable devotees (*bhaktas*) and not as drawing-room or museum specimens to be judged chiefly for their artistic merits or demerits. Rao himself says, 'Like all art, the Indian icono-plastic art also has to be judged from the standpoint of its motive. To those who cannot appreciate this motive, the very ideal of the art remains hidden and inexplicable.' These rules, therefore, facilitated to a very great extent the work of the image-maker and helped immensely the development of the icono-plastic art in this country. There are good and indifferent artists in every country and in different periods the artistic activities of its inhabitants seem for various reasons to reach a very high level or in other times sink down to a low one; but to make these injunctions mainly responsible for the latter condition is not scientifically correct. We should never minimise the very common advice to be met with in such compilations that the *śilpin*, though he should closely follow the rules, must try to make the image as beautiful as possible, for have not the gods a special liking for beautiful images (*ābhirūpyācca vimbānāṃ devaḥ sānnidhyamṛcchati*)? The reputed art centres of ancient India, such as Mathura, Gandhāra, Sarnath, Amaravati, etc., were the homelands of the master artists whose works served as standards on which these canons appear to have been based. The images fashioned by their chisel were in great demand in various other parts of India; this is proved by early epigraphic and monumental evidence. It is unfortunate that we know so little about them, as they generally hid themselves behind the names of such mythical artists as Viśvakarmā, Maya and others. We have no means of identifying an Indian Phidias, a Polyclitus or a Lysippas. It is quite accidentally that we light upon the names of a few individual artists from some inscribed sculptural and architectural fragments of early period. The ivory-carvers of Vidiśā might or might not have been responsible for the

actual carving of a section of the railing of the Great Sanchi Stupa, which was their gift; but a Nāka, pupil of Kunika, was the maker of the so-called statue of Manasā Devī at Mathura (really the image of Yakṣī Layava, as the inscription on the pedestal informs us), the stone mason (*śilārūpakāra*) Śivamitra was responsible for the early Kushan image of a Bodhisattva discovered in 1908-09 at Śrāvastī by Marshall (only the lower portion of the statue with the inscription was found) and Dinna, a resident of Mathura, fashioned a statuette of the Gupta period as also the famous Nirvāṇa statue, both discovered at Kasia (the former was found by Vögel).[1] One of the two Sūrya images of the Gauḍian school in the collection of the British Museum bears on its pedestal an inscription in very corrupt Sanskrit in Nāgarī characters of the tenth century A.D. It reads '*Oṃ Indranīlamaṇiśiṣyaḥ śilāya buddhiḥ sālinā* l *ghaṭitāya kritajñena Amṛtena suśi(l)pinā*. It has been translated thus by R. P. Chanda : ' (This image) has been carved in stone by the wise, grateful, and good artist Amṛta, pupil of Indranīlamaṇi ' (R. P. Chanda, *Mediaeval Indian Sculptures in the British Museum*, p. 66, Pl. XX). Here we get the names of two good sculptors of eastern India, *viz.*, Amṛta and Indranīlamaṇi ; the work of the former bears undoubtedly the stamp of an artist of consummate skill and ability, who can well claim to be designated as a *suśilpin*. One other interesting fact to be noted in the above inscription is this : Amṛta does not fail to express his gratitude for the artistic ability which he acquired from his preceptor. More of such inscriptions on the extant images would have been of great use to students of Indian icono-plastic art. We wish we could get many such personal names and had an Indian Pausanias

[1] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1922-23, p. 165; if Vögel's reading of the pedestal inscription of the Parkham Yakṣa is correct, then we find the name of another pupil of Kunika, *viz.*, Bhadapugarin Gomitaka—*Bhadapugarina(ka)...(ga) atha...pi...Kuni (ka) te vāsina (Gomitakena) katā*. But the inscription is extremely fragmentary and various readings have been suggested; still all agree in reading Kunika and so evidently this Yakṣa statue was also the handiwork of another pupil of Kunika; *Mathura Mus. Cat.*, p. 83. *Māthureṇa śilārūpakāreṇa Śivamitreṇa Bodhisattvā kṛtā*; *kṛti(r)-Dinnasya* in the Gupta statuette and *Pratimā ceyaṃ ghaṭitā Dinnena Māthurakeṇa*, in the other one.

who could have given us a systematic record of the activities of such Nākas, Kunikas, Śivamitras, Dinnas, Amṛtas and Indranīlamaṇis of the remote past.

The last, though not the least, important factor contributing to the development of Indian religious art was certainly the systematic patronage which was given by the ruling powers of early and mediaeval India. The growth and development of these sectarian religions were largely due to the activities of the ancient sovereigns; the religion of Buddha could certainly not have been as great as it came to be in later times, had there been no Aśoka to espouse its cause and try his level best for its propagation in India, as well as outside India. The Brahmanical sectaries too found their champions not only in the persons of indigenous rulers, but also in those of foreign ones who held sway over different parts of India. The great Kushan emperor Wema Kadphises was an ardent devotee of Śiva and in the spirit of a true sectary only used the figure and rarely the emblem of the god of his choice as his coin device; it will not at all be presumptuous to suppose that many Śaiva shrines were erected in the different parts of his empire under his imperial patronage. His successors were probably eclectic in spirit, and they patronised equally the various religious cults flourishing in their dominions.[1] The imperial Guptas were devout Bhāgavatas and it is certain that extensive patronage was given by them to this particular cult, but it is also proved by archaeological data that other sectaries, both orthodox and heterodox, from the Brahmanical point of view, flourished side by side. The imperial Pālas of Bengal were Paramasaugatas and the Senas were worshippers of Sadāśiva. Many such other instances can be shown in which the royalties extensively patronised one or other of the cults and those that were not professed by them did also prevail in their

[1] The earlier view about the eclecticism of the Kanishka group of kings has been challenged by Rapson (who himself once held the view) and Kennedy. But the explanation which is given by Rapson of the varied reverse, if accepted by scholars, would also support my hypothesis. His latest view as expressed in his *C.C.A.W.K.T.B*, p. XII, f.n., is, 'The coins, no doubt, reflect the particular form of religion which prevailed in the district in which they were struck.'

kingdoms. The temples and religious structures which were built by them or by rich and influential citizens in their realms had to be decorated with numbers of subsidiary figures and other forms. Images were also necessary for the primary purpose of enshrinement in the main sanctum. Not only were the shrines of these gods built, but also funerary structures in honour of their departed ancestors were erected by the royalties and rich magnates, and shrines with images of gods and goddesses were invariable adjuncts to them. Then again, monastic establishments, associated with one or other of the Brahmanical sectaries, would contain different *devagṛhas* and *daivatas* (temples and images). Lastly, *Gurvvāyatanas* were erected by various sectarian clericals, which also contained shrines and images of gods. One of the earliest *Gurvvāyatanas* that we know of is the one referred to in the stone pillar inscription of the time of Chandragupta II (year 61 of the Gupta Era), which records the establishment of two images (Śivaliṅgas), called Kapileśvara and Upamiteśvara, in such a shrine, by the Pāśupata Ācārya Uditācārya, after the names of his gurus. The base of the inscribed pilaster contains a three-eyed and two-armed human figure holding a club in the right hand and an unidentified object in the left hand shown akimbo (*cf.* the early Śiva figures on Ujjayinī coins), correctly identified by D. R. Bhandarkar as Lakulīśa, the founder or systematiser of the Pāśupata sect.[1] All these different religious and funerary structures contained numbers of divine images and emblems and served as a great incentive to the development of icono-plastic art in India. These temple-building and image-making activities received a rude check in the hands of many of the Muslim rulers of India after her invasion by the Muhammadans. The relative prevalence of these activities in the different parts of India shows the truth of the above remark. The part which was last to be affected by the Islamic conquest retained in a remarkable manner these active manifestations of the religious instinct of its people to a late period, and this

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXI, pp. 4-8.

explains why in the extreme south of India magnificent temples and innumerable images of substantial proportions were being made when such activities had already been much restricted in the north. Muslim rulers could not, on account of their creed, patronise them as the Hindu kings and emperors did before, and thus their Hindu subjects had to satisfy their pious needs with much smaller images and emblems in stone and bronze for worship in private chapels of their individual households.

CHAPTER VII

Iconographic Terminology

One studying Indian Iconography should know the meaning of certain technical terms in order to understand correctly the images of divinities and their accessories. The images are mostly depicted in an anthropomorphic fashion. The dress, ornaments, weapons, implements, etc., as shown on them are mostly identical with what are used by men. I have already laid stress on Varāhamihira's dictum about the close similarity between the dress and ornaments worn by the people of a country and the same shown on the bodies of the gods worshipped there (*Deśānurūpabhūṣaṇaveśālaṅkāra-mūrttibhiḥ kāryā*). I have also suggested in the first chapter how an intensive study of images current in a particular locality will help one to throw much light on its social history. I now propose to explain the nature of some of these technical terms which are used to denote one or other of these various forms of dress, ornaments, weapons and implements; the various poses in which the different limbs of the images are shown by the artist will also be explained. These terms are very often used in the iconographic texts which, as every student of this subject knows, serve as the guide-books of the iconographer. While explaining some of them, I shall refer to their early and late forms of representation in art, whenever possible. T. A. G. Rao, in giving a fair account of these technicalities, hardly ever touched on this point.

The various poses in which the hands of the images and the figures arranged round them are shown are quite interesting. The technical term, used in the texts to denote these poses, is *mudrā*; sometimes the word *hasta* is also used to denote one or other of these hand-poses. The latter is generally used in cases where the whole of the arm along with the hand is

shown in a particular pose (cf. *daṇḍahasta, gajahasta, kaṭi-hasta*, etc.), while the former usually denotes the peculiar posture in which the palm with the fingers is shown (cf. *jñāna-mudrā, cinmudrā* or *vyākhyāna-mudrā, yoga-* or *dhyāna-mudrā*, etc.). It must be observed, however, that sometimes, though comparatively rarely, both the terms are used in the texts to signify particular hand-poses; thus, in iconographic parlance, *abhaya-mudrā* and *abhaya-hasta* and *varada-mudrā* and *varada-hasta* are equally appropriate. It is true that the term *hasta* can also be used in association with an emblem or weapon in the hand of the deity; thus *padma-hasta, pustaka-hasta, gadā-hasta*, etc., would mean a hand holding a lotus, a book and a mace respectively. But sometimes, there has been confusion regarding the appropriate sense of a certain term; thus, *sūcī* means a ' sewing needle,' but it has also various other meanings, one of which is ' the act of pointing '. Now when a deity is described as *sūcī-hasta*, he (or she) may hold a sewing needle in the hand: but the term may also signify the pointing pose. Again, *daṇḍa-hasta* may mean one holding a club in hand, or it may denote a specific gesture.

Hastas and *mudrās* thus usually indicate some action which the god or his attendant is shown to be engaged in. The action consists in the expression of an idea by means of a particular gesture. Man, himself a rational being, gifted with the power of speech, often finds it necessary to use such gestures to express completely his ideas; sometimes, a mere gesture of the hand or any other limb will contain a volume of ideas which would otherwise be only imperfectly expressed.[1] How absolutely necessary will it be

[1] In India, many of the hand-poses were long stereotyped. Coomaraswamy observes, "Such motions must have been elaborated and codified at a very early date; and later on we find that the art of silent communication by means of signs, which is in effect a ' deaf and dumb language,' and just like the American Indian hand-language, was regularly regarded as one of the ' sixty-four arts ' which every educated person should have knowledge of." He refers to Jātaka No: 546 (J. text, VI, 364) where the Bodhisattva judges the suitability of a woman for being his wife by communicating to her through the medium of a particular hand-sign (*hattha-muddā*); she understood it correctly and replied to him with another of her own; Coomaraswamy and Gopālakrishnāyya, *The Mirror of Gesture*, p. 24.

for him to endow his mute gods with such suggestive action-poses in order that the idea or ideas which he wants to be symbolised by his deities may be correctly explained! Herein — in this very act of showing the images belonging to the various Indian religious creeds with the different gestures — lay one of the marked and significant differences between the fetish of a Polynesian tribe and the developed image worshipped by the highly civilised Indians. In India of the pre-historic times, a few of the expressive poses were used to characterise the representation of the divinities on seals, amulets and figurines. Some of the conventional hand-poses, that were common in early and late mediaeval iconographic art of India, can be definitely recognised in the Central Indian art of the Śuṅga period.

It should be noted here that the fully developed and technical *mudrās*, that are described in such Indian works on dramaturgy as *Nāṭyaśāstra*, *Abhinayadarpaṇa*, etc., have no practical application in our present study. It is true that some south Indian types of dancing Śiva of the mediaeval period or the Vajrayāna deities of the same age in the north, specially the latter, are liberally characterised by these *mudrās*; but very few are the Hindu gods and goddesses, especially of the earlier period, whose hands are shown in any of the highly technical poses. Such *mudrās* as are reproduced by me in Plate V from a late Buddhist text on ritualism procured by P. C. Bagchi from Nepal (it contains many more such hand-poses) are usually adopted by a *bhakta* or a *sādhaka* in the Tāntric form of worship or *sādhanā*. R. K. Poduval distinguishes between 'three broad divisions of *mudrās*, *viz.*, Vaidic, Tāntric and Laukik (*mudrās* in Art).' He says that he has recognised as many as '64 *mudrās* in Art and 108 in Tantra. The Vaidic *mudrās* are more or less finger signs or indications employed to regulate the stress, rhythm and intonation in the chanting of Vedas by Brahmins.'[1]

[1] *Administration Report of the Archaeological Department*, Travancore State, 1107 M.E., pp. 6-7, and plate. In the outline drawing of *mudrās*, Poduval wrongly describes the two well-known ones, *viz.*, *abhaya* and *varada*; what is really *varada* is described by him as *abhaya* and that which is *abhaya*, as *varada*.

Poduval has reproduced as many as 45 *mudrās*, which are described by him as *añjali*, *vandanī*, *yoni*, *vaināyakī*, *hṛdaya*, *śiras*, *śikhā*, *kavaca*, *astra*, *netra* (*-dvaya*, *-traya*), *garuḍa*, *galini* (*gālinī*?), *surabhī*, *abhivāhinī*, *stāpini* (*sthāpanī*?), *sannidhāpanī*, *sammukhī*, *avakuṇḍanī* (*avaguṇṭhanī*?), *prasādanī*, *sannirodhinī*, *śaṅkha*, *gadā*, *padma*, *paraśu*, *hariṇa*, *abhaya*, *varada*, *śūla*, *kapāla*, *cakra*, five types of *prāṇāhuti* (perhaps symbolising the offering of five vital breaths or *pañca prāṇāḥ*, *viz.*, *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *udāna* and *vyāna*), *śara*, *cāpa*, *kūrma*, *jala*, *gandha*, *puṣpa*, *dhūpa*, *dīpa*, *nivedya* (*naivedya*), and *matsya*. A careful analysis of these names shows that some are connected with the deities to be worshipped, while others, with the worshipper, a third set again symbolising the *upacāras* used in worship. A glance at his plate will show that there is a close parallelism between the pose outlined by the position of the hands and fingers, and the name by which the pose is described. To refer to one or two instances: the *vaināyakī-mudrā* characteristically outlines the elephant head of Vināyaka with its lolling trunk, the *śaṅkha-mudrā*, a conch-shell, the *hariṇa-mudrā*, a deer-head with its antlers, the *kapāla-mudrā*, a skull with its concave side shown up, *matsya-mudrā*, a fish and so on. But most, if not all, of these, were adopted by the devotee or the aspirant after salvation in the ritualistic performance of his *pūjā* or *sādhanā*. Reference should also be made, in this connection, to Poduval's diagrams of several *mudrās* which are used by the Nambudiri chanters of the Sāman hymns in Kerala; he has photographed as many as twenty-five of such hand-poses from actual life, assigning no name however to any of them.[1]

[1] R. K. Poduval, *op. cit.*, 1109 M.E., p. 8 and plate. He refers to a Sanskrit work on histrionics and dramaturgy, *Bālarāmabhāratam* by name, written by king Bālarāma Kulaśekhara Vañci Bhūpāla of Travancore. The work deals with, among other things, the *aṅgas*, *upāṅgas* and *pratyaṅgas* in Nāṭya, and classifies them each under six subdivisions. 'The *aṅgas* include the movements of the head, hands, breast, sides of the body, hips and feet; the *upāṅgas*, those of the eyes, eyebrows, nose, cheeks, chin and lips; while under the *pratyaṅgas* come the movements of the neck, arm, abdomen, loins, thighs and the shanks.' There is hardly any doubt that this portion of the work is based on works on histrionics and dramaturgy of a much earlier date. The poses of the hand are classified into *asamyuta-* and

Among the forty-five Tāntric *mudrās* illustrated by Poduval, we can recognise only a few that were also depicted in the early representations of the Indian divinities and their attendants; these are *abhaya, varada* and *añjali* (*cāpa-, śara-* and *kapāla-mudrās* may also come under this category, if we note that the hands of the deity holding a bow, an arrow and a skull are shown in the gestures as illustrated in the plate). Many more *mudrās* or *hastas* in which the hands of the images were usually depicted, such as *dhyāna* or *yoga, jñāna, vyākhyāna, dharmacakra, kaṭyavalambita, kaṭaka* or *siṃha-karṇa, gaja* or *daṇḍa, sūcī, tarjanī, vismaya, bhūsparśa*, etc., are not included in the list. But, as it has already been observed, the list is more indicative of the practice of the ritualist himself than the pose of any deity in particular. The *abhaya-hasta* is the same as *śāntida* which latter term has been used by Varāhamihira in his description of the two-, four- and eight-armed images of Viṣṇu (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, vv. 33-5). This pose has been very characteristically explained by Utpala as ' the hand turned towards the visitor (*i.e.*, turned to front) with fingers raised upwards' (*draṣṭura-bhimukha ūrdhvāṅguliḥ śāntidaḥ karaḥ*). One cannot improve upon this description, and a glance at the right-hand pose of the Mathura Buddha figure of the Kushan period, sketched in Fig. 5 of Plate III of this book, will show that it fittingly illustrates the description. The right hand of the Śiva-Viśvāmitra figure (on the coins of Dharaghoṣa), sketched in Fig. 20 of Plate I of this book, is also in the same manner. Fig. 20 in Plate II is based on the representation of King Brahmadatta in the illustration of the Mahākapi Jātaka at Bharhut; the right hand of the king is shown also in the same pose and thus the artist typifies the protection 'assured' by the king to the monkey chief, who is none other than the Buddha himself in one of his numerous previous births. Some of the divinities represented on early Indian coins and seals have also one of their hands in the same pose. This

saṃyuta-hastas, as many as forty of the former and twenty-seven of the latter being described in the book. See *infra* about 23 former and 13 latter types of hand-poses adopted in dancing, as mentioned in the *Viṣṇudharmottara*.

is one of the commonest *mudrās* in which one or the other hand of the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina images is shown, and it stands for the assurance of fearlessness, tranquillity and protection given by the deity to his worshipper. *Varada-* or, simply, *vara-mudrā*, also another of the typically common *mudrās* in iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India, symbolises the bestowal of boon or benediction by the god on his votary. In the Śivaite mythology, the act of grace or benediction (*anugraha*) is regarded as one of the five principal activities of the lord Śiva (*pañca-kṛtyas, viz., sṛṣṭi, i.e.*, the act of creation, *sthiti*—of preservation, *saṃhāra*—of destruction, *tirobhāva*—of obscuration, and *anugraha*—of grace). The stereotyped manner of depicting this pose in art is by putting the palm spread outwards with the fingers pointing down; in standing figures the arm usually hangs down by the side of the body, while in seated ones the arm is sometimes flexed according to artistic requirements. Varāhamihira while describing the four- and eight-armed images of Ekānaṃśā says that one right hand of either variety of the goddess is to be shown in the *varada* pose. Utpala explains the term *varada* as the pose in which the palm with fingers pointing downwards is shown inside out (*uttāno'dho'ṅgulirhasto varadaḥ—Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, p. 780). The *añjali-, vandanī-* or *namaskāra-mudrā* is usually to be found in the hands of the devotees or in those of the attendant or subordinate deities.[1] This is one of the earliest hand-poses recognisable in art, its antiquity going as far back as the age of the Indus Valley civilisation. I have referred in the last chapter to the supplicating pose of the figure kneeling before the tree goddess on one of the Mohenjo-daro seals, the scene being described by Marshall as the epiphany of the tree spirit; the hands are, however, not joined together as they should be in the *samputāñjali pose*. But this is also not wanting; several of the terracotta human figurines that were discovered at Harappa distinctly portray it. I may refer to a few

[1] I have not made any distinction between *añjali-, vandanī-* and *namaskāra-mudrās*; the last denotes also the action of touching the forehead with folded hands. The idea of reverence is present in everyone of these terms.

descriptions of such clay figurines given by M.S. Vats: 'No. 6 is a squatting male figure with folded hands,' 'No. 7 is seated with hands folded in devotional attitude,' 'No. 8 a rough figure seated on its haunches with arms clasped about the knees and hands folded in worship,' 'Nos. 9 and 10 also show male figurines with their hands folded above the breast.'[1] Reference has already been made in the last chapter to the two Mohenjo-daro seals which contain figures of a god seated in *yoga* posture, on whose either side kneels a half-human half-animal form of a Nāga with hands uplifted in prayer. This evidence fully proves that the idea of worship was widely prevalent among the pre-Vedic people of the Indus Valley. *Kupiro Yakho* (Kubera, the king of the Yakṣas and the guardian of the northern quarter) is depicted in Bharhut with his hands in this pose (Pl. II, Fig. 19); many more are the Yakṣa, Nāga, and human votaries that are shown with their hands in the devotional attitude. This is the most correct attitude of a devotee, and sometimes this pose alone enables us to distinguish the chief deity from one subordinate to him. Thus, Nandin, originally Śiva himself in theriomorphic form and afterwards his mount, is carved exactly like Śiva in late mediaeval and modern reliefs of southern India; the only distinction lies in the fact that his 'front' hands are in the *namaskāra* pose (the 'back' hands, like those of Śiva, carry *paraśu* and *mṛga*) while Śiva's 'front' hands are shown in the *abhaya* and *varada* poses.

Dhyāna-, *yoga-*, or *samādhi-mudrā* is that particular pose in which 'the palm of the right hand is placed in that of the left hand and both together are laid on the crossed legs of the seated image' (Rao). Thus, it is specially associated with a seated figure and is one of the most correct attitudes for the practice of *dhyāna-yoga*. One of the earliest descriptions of the correct pose of a *yogī* is to be found in the *Bhagavadgītā*, which says that the *yogī* should be 'steady, holding his body, head, and neck balanced and motionless, fixing his gaze on the end of his nose, and looking not about

[1] *Excavations at Harappa*, p. 294, Pl. LXXVI.

him.'[1] *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, one of the early Buddhist texts, also gives us a clear idea about the sitting posture of a *yogī* in these words: '*nisīdati pallaṅkaṃ ābhujitvā ujuṃ kāyaṃ paṇidhāya parimukhaṃ satiṃ upaṭṭhapetvā*', *i.e.*, '(he) sits bending (the legs) crosswise (*i.e.*, he sits cross-legged) on a raised seat, with erect body and setting up his memory (*i.e.*, of the object of thought) in front.'[2] But it is noteworthy that in such descriptions there is not the least allusion to the pose of the hand, which, as the Indus Valley seals show, was different. The prototype of Śiva-Paśupati shows his hands stretched sideways over the knees; this is also a yogic pose and ascetics seated entranced in this manner can be found in India even now.[3] The earliest approach to the *dhyāna-mudrā* of the texts, as explained by the quotation from Rao, is to be found in the figure of a deity seated on a lotus seat, appearing on certain copper coins of Ujjayinī, that can be dated in the 2nd-3rd century B.C. (Pl. II, Fig. 16).[4]

[1] *Bhagavadgītā*, VI, 13: *Samaṃ kāyaśirogrivaṃ dhārayannacalaṃ sthiraḥ* | *Saṃprekṣya nāsikāgraṃ svaṃ diśaścānavalokayan.* The translation given above is taken from W. D. P. Hill's edition of the *Bhagavadgītā*, p. 157.

[2] *Dīgha-Nikāya* (P.T.S. Ed.), Vol. I, p. 71. It was R. P. Chanda who first drew our attention to this passage as well as the Gītā one, in order to explain the peculiar look and attitude of the mutilated limestone statue found at Mohenjo-daro as well as the three- or one-faced deity on seals, already noted; *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1929-30, pp. 191-92. *Saṃkara* in his commentary on the *Gīta* passage quoted above says that the phrase about 'fixing his gaze on the tip of his nose' is figuratively used and it really means 'fixing the eyesight within.' Hill, however, observes that 'there is no doubt that the physical posture was literally recommended.'

[3] The description of Śiva practising *dhyānayoga* in the *Kumārasambhava*, gives us a full idea of the hand-pose. The passage reads: *Paryaṅkabandhasthirapūrvakāyamṛjvāyataṃ saṃnamitobhayāṃsam* | *Uttānapaṇidvayasaṃniveśāt praphullarājīvamivāṅkamadhye.* The *āsana* is the same as *padmāsana* where the legs are interlocked on the seat, the upper part of the body remains straight and well spread, both the shoulders being bent a little; the palms turned upwards are placed on the lap like a full-blown lotus. The fixing of the eyes on the tip of the nose is beautifully expressed by Kālidāsa in the following verse (III, 47): *Kiṃcitprakāśastimitogratārairbhrūvikriyāyā viratāprasaṅgaiḥ* | *Netrairavispanditapakṣmamālair-lakṣyīkṛtaghrāṇa madhomayūkhaiḥ.*

[4] Coomaraswamy found in it one of the earliest representations of Buddha in the *dhyāna* pose, but it may as well stand for Śiva, the great *Yogī*. The coin device is very much blurred and it is not sure whether the palms of the forearms flexed inwards near the waist actually joined each other on the lap; my drawing is based on the obverse of Fig. 10 in Plate X of Cunningham's *Coins of Ancient India*.

In Gandhāra some of the numerous Buddha figures are shown with their hands in this pose; its association with asceticism (*tapas*) is characteristically emphasised in the figures of Buddha practising asceticism in the collections of the Peshawar and Lahore Museums.[1] The red sandstone figure of Pārśvanātha from Mathura, now in the collection of the Lucknow Museum, shows the *jina* seated erect with his legs crossed and his hands in the *dhyāna-mudrā*; it belongs to the early Kushan period.[2] Many images, Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain, of the Gupta age, as well as of the early and late mediaeval periods, show this pose, two Yogāsana-Viṣṇu figures in the Mathura Museum characteristically portraying it.[3]

Two other *mudrās* which are also found in the iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India have been named by T. A. G. Rao as *jñāna-* and *vyākhyāna-*, *vitarka-* or *cin-mudrā*. Rao says that, in the former, ' the tips of the middle finger and of the thumb are joined together and held near the heart, with the palm of the hand turned towards the heart.' Fig. 2 in Plate III of this book illustrates this pose. The 'front' right hand of the figure of Nārāyaṇa in the Nara-Nārāyaṇa relief at Deogarh shows it; but it can probably be traced to a period far earlier than the Gupta age.[4] Drawing No. 1 in Plate III is based on the figure of Ajakālaka Yakṣa in Bharhut with his right hand in the same characteristic pose; the standing male figure in the representation of a donor couple (or are they Yakṣa and Yakṣiṇī?) in a part of the Bharhut railing has his left hand shown in the same pose, but it must be observed that in

[1] H. Hargreaves, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Peshawar Museum*, Pl. 3. *Cf.* also statuette No. 1550 in the Mathura Museum; this Gandhāra stone figurine showing the ascetic Buddha is said to have been found at Maholi village about 100 years ago; V. S. Agrawala, *Handbook of the Sculptures in the Curzon Museum of Archaeology*, Muttra, p. 52, Pl. XXII, Fig. 43.

[2] Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, Pl. XXIII, Fig. 86.

[3] V. S. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 45.

[4] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXXI. Rao wrongly described this relief as the Jñāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva; Yarde first corrected this mistake and identified the two ascetic figures seated side by side as Nara-Nārāyaṇa on the basis of the *Viṣṇudharmottara*.

both a lotus flower is placed between the tips of the thumb and the index finger.[1] We are not certain, however, whether this typical pose was known under that name as early as the 2nd century B.C.; as regards the things held by the hands, it should be noted that different objects, such as a lotus flower, a rosary, a bowl, etc., are sometimes placed in them even when they typify some particular pose (for example, in some Dhyānī Buddha figures, an alms-bowl is placed on the hands showing *dhyāna-mudrā*). The *cinmudrā* is described by Rao thus,—' the tips of the thumb and the forefinger are made to touch each other, so as to form a circle, the other fingers being kept open. The palm of the hand is made to face the front.' The hand in this pose is usually raised upwards near the breast and it appears that this is the exact counterpart of *jñāna-mudrā*. Rao remarks about it that it is the ' *mudrā* adopted when an explanation or exposition is being given; hence it is also called *vyākhyāna-mudrā* and *sandarśana-mudrā* ' (Pl. III, Fig. 3). The extreme right section of a large panel in the Cave temple of Rāmeśvara at Ellora depicts Subrahmaṇya teaching his father Śiva the significance of *Om*; the right hand of the polycephalous god is shown in the *vyākhyāna* pose, a rosary being shown in the palm.[2] The two-armed figure of Nara in the Deogarh relief just referred to shows his right hand in the same pose, a rosary being also placed in the hand. One of the earliest representations of a teacher expounding his lessons or doctrines is to be found at Bharhut where the sage Dīrghatapasvī is shown in the attitude of instructing his pupils; he is sitting at ease on a raised seat facing his four disciples seated below in a reverential attitude; his left hand rests on his knee while his right hand is raised towards his breast with the thumb and index fingers projecting outwards, the other fingers being bent inwards. It is

[1] For Ajakālaka figure, see B. M. Barua, *Bharhut*, Bk. III, Pl. LVII, Fig. 61; for the figure of the donor (?) couple at Bharhut, *cf.* Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, Pl. XII, Fig. 44.

[2] T. A. G. Rao, *op.* cit., Vol. II, p. 350, pl. CV. The centre and left sections of the panel portray the incidents connected with the marriage of Śiva with Pārvatī.

true that the tips of the thumb and the forefinger are not joined together, but they also characteristically portray the expounding pose.[1] A reference now to the *dharmacakra-mudrā*, though it is usually associated with the Buddha images and not with those of any Brahmanical deity, will be of some interest. The particular pose symbolises the first preaching of the law by the Master at Sarnath, thus, figuratively speaking, setting thenceforward the 'Wheel of the Law' in motion; it was also used in the representation of the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī. The Gandhāra artists were never sure about the mode in which it was to be depicted; sometimes the right hand of the Buddha was placed on the rim of a wheel on stand, at other times the hand, seemingly in the *abhaya* pose, was used to serve the purpose, while more frequently it was depicted in a manner that was not at all suggestive of any clear idea (the right hand with fingers flexed inward was placed near the breast, the left hand with its fingers drawn together touching it from below). But in the truly Indian images of the Buddha from the Gupta period onwards, the *dharmacakra-mudrā* is invariably presented in the manner shown in Fig. 4, Plate III, of this book. A glance at the drawing will at once show that this hand-pose is nothing but the combined representation of *jñāna-* and *vyākhyāna-mudrās*, the left hand being in the former and the right in the latter. The ideology here is thus characteristically expressive: Buddha in the act of expounding the true knowledge which he had himself first obtained through his efforts.[2]

The *kaṭyavalambita-* or *kaṭisaṃsthita-hasta* is the pose in which 'the arm is let down so as to hang by the side of the body, and the hand is made to rest on the loin, indicating thus a posture of ease' (*Rao*); but the hand is usually bent a little at the elbow and placed on the upper part

[1] B. M. Barua, *Bharhut*, Book III, Pl. LXXVIII, Fig. 104; the inscription above reads: *Dīghatapasi sise anusāsati*, i.e., '*Dirghatapasvī* instructs his disciples.' Fig. 18 in Pl. II of this book is based on the Bharhut figure of Dīrghatapasvī.

[2] This interpretation of the *dharmacakra-mudrā* was first suggested by me in my article on 'The Webbed Fingers of Buddha', published in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VI, 1930, p. 722, f. n. 4.

of the waist. This is one of the commonest poses in which the left hand of a standing image is shown (in seated images also, this pose is frequently met with). Figures 19, 20, 21, 22 and 28 in Plate I of this book illustrate the manner in which it appears in the representation of deities on early Indian coins. Figure 28 is sketched from a punch-marked coin in the Purnea hoard, Fig. 19, from Śiva on some coins of Wema Kadphises, Fig. 20, from Śiva-Viśvāmitra on Dharaghoṣa's silver coins, Fig. 21, from Śiva Chatreśvara on some Kuniṇḍa coins, Fig. 22, from Lakṣmī on the unique coin with the legend '*Pakhalavadidevata*' grouped by the numismatists in the Indo-Scythic series (both the obverse and reverse devices of this coin with the reverse legend meaning 'the city deity of Puṣkalāvatī' are reproduced in Pl. IX, fig. 7; in association with the bull described as *Tauros-Uṣabhe*, *i.e.*, *Vṛṣabha* in the obverse legend, she may also be identified as *Pārvatī*, the consort of Śiva shown here as a humped bull). The goddess appearing on some copper coins of Azes, identified by me as Durgā Siṃhavāhinī or Ekānaṃśā, shows this characteristic pose (Pl. IX, Fig. 5; the humped bull on the reverse side of this copper coin undoubtedly stands for her consort Śiva in his theriomorphic form). Varāhamihira described the image of Ekānaṃśā as *kaṭisaṃsthitavāmakarā sarojamitareṇa codvahatī*, *i.e.*, 'with her left hand placed on her waist while the other (right) hand holds a lotus flower' (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, p. 780). The standing images of Buddha, the Nāgas and various other divinities, of the early Kushan and subsequent periods found at Mathura and adjacent places very frequently display this attitude; the Katra, Anyor and Mankuwar images of seated Buddha also show the same pose. Coomaraswamy was fully justified in remarking that this pose along with the raised right hand was the iconographic pose *par excellence* in ancient and mediaeval India. Figure 14 in Plate II of this book, based on the device of a Mathura coin, shows that perhaps the order was sometimes, though very rarely, reversed. Figure 1, in Plate IV, is sketched from the usual pose appearing in many Brahmanical images. A brief reference to the

kāyotsarga pose which is usually adopted in the representations of the Jinas will not be out of place here. In it the hands are shown hanging straight down the side of the body without the least bend in any of the limbs; this is described by Varāhamihira as *ājānulambabāhu, i.e.*, ' the arms long enough to reach the knees ' (this is one of the characteristic signs of great men and divine beings). R. P. Chanda was the first to note the portrayal of this pose on some Indus Valley seals (*cf.* the seal with the epiphany of the tree-spirit, discussed by me in chapter V, reproduced here in Plate VII, Fig. 3); Fig. 13, in Plate II, sketched by me from a punch-marked coin device, also portrays the same hand pose.

Kaṭaka- or *siṃhakarṇa-hasta* denotes that particular pose wherein ' the tips of the fingers are loosely applied to the thumb so as to form a ring or, as somewhat poetically expressed by the latter name, so as to resemble a lion's ear (*Rao*). As Gopinath Rao has rightly understood, this pose is very useful in the depiction of goddesses in one of whose hands fresh flowers are often inserted ; it is thus very common in the iconographic representation of divinities. One of the earliest instances of this posture is to be found in the figure of Sirimā devatā at Bharhut where her right hand holding a lotus flower (partially broken) shows it, her left hand hanging stiffly by her side. *Daṇḍahasta* or *gajahasta* has got the technical sense of the arm thrown forward (sometimes across the body), appearing like a straight staff or the lolling trunk of an elephant (Pl. III, Fig. 8). The palm in this drawing seems to be in the *vainā̃yakī mudrā* ; in the well-known *Naṭarāja* images of Śiva, this *mudrā* is clearly recognisable. This pose is usually met with in images of gods or goddesses shown in the dancing attitude. Śiva Naṭarāja dancing vigorously on the back of Mūyaḷaka or the Apasmāra puruṣa, Nṛtya-Gaṇapati, Kṛṣṇa Kālīyadamana, dancing Cāmuṇḍā and such other images have one of their hands in this pose. The figure of the danseuse on the right side in drawing No. 22, Plate II, has her right arm stretched forward in a manner somewhat

different from the above, but it can justifiably be described as another variety of the same pose. Several other dancing Apsarasas in Bharhut have one of their hands extended in a different manner, but all illustrate the idea of the stretching of a staff or an elephant trunk. The significance of *sūcīhasta* has already been explained by me ; it is comparatively rare in iconographic art (Pl. IV, Fig. 6, but it should be shown upside down). Another very suggestive hand-pose is the *tarjanī-hasta*, where the projected forefinger of the right hand points upwards (in the *sūcī*, it usually points downwards, the hand being held down), ' as if the hand is warning or scolding another' (Rao). A person while threatening or admonishing another very often holds his hand in this position, and so there is a characteristic conformity here between the actual practice and artistic representation (Pl. IV, Fig. 6). In Vajrayāna *sadhanas*, Mārīcī and several other goddesses are very often described as *tarjanī-pāśahastā*, *i.e.*, 'with a hand holding a *tarjanī-pāśa*'. It is not meant hereby that the deity holds a noose (*pāśa*) in one hand while another is shown in the *tarjanī* pose, but the epithet really means that the noose which is meant for chastisement is placed in the same hand which is shown in the threatening pose; this interpretation is actually borne out by the images of the above goddesses. One of the earliest representations of this particular *hasta* is to be found in a Jātaka relief on one of the coping stones at Bharhut; this scene has been tentatively identified by B. M. Barua as illustrating the Gahapati Jātaka (Fausboll, 199). The standing figure on the right side in this section of the coping, none other than the Bodhisattva himself as the householder, is threatening and admonishing with the projecting forefinger of his raised right hand another male figure, shown seated below, cowering ; a female figure is seen peeping out of a hut, to whom the seated figure points with both hands (the pose in which the latter's hands are shown can with some justification be called *sūcī*).[1] The right

[1] For the story and illustration, *cf.* B. M. Barua, *Bharhut*, Bk. II, pp. 105-106, Vol. III, Pl. LXXXVI, Fig. 102. Barua thus describes the attitudes of the two male figures in the scene : the seated man ' with downcast eyes is pleading his

hand of Sudarśanā Yakṣiṇī in Bharhut seems to be in a pose practically similar to the *tarjanī* (Pl. II, Fig. 23). Barua is not quite accurate in his description of the Yakṣiṇī when he writes ' the four fingers of her right hand are bent towards the palm, while, the thumb remains stretched out' ; his plate (*op. cit.*, Vol. III, Pl. LXIV, Fig. 74) as well as my drawing definitely shows that three fingers only are bent inwards, both the forefinger and the thumb remaining stretched upwards.

T. A. G. Rao rightly observes that ' *vismaya-hasta* indicates astonishment and wonder. In this pose the forearm is held up with the fingers of the hand pointing up and the palm turned away from the observer' (Pl. IV, Fig. 4). The relief illustrating the Caṇḍeśānugrahamūrti of Śiva in the Kailāsanātha temple at Conjeevaram, belonging to the Pallava period, shows the father of Caṇḍeśa ' fallen on the ground, with his left hand held in the *vismaya* pose ' (for the story and its illustration, *cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 209 and Pl. XLIX, Fig. 2). It will be of use to refer here to Fig. No. 3 in Plate IV of this book ; the drawing is based on a railing pillar relief of the Śaka-Kushan period in the collection of the Mathura Museum. A male figure is shown standing with the index and middle fingers placed on his chin. The figure has been rightly identified by V. S. Agrawala and B. S. Upadhyay as the young hermit Ṛṣyaśṛṅga ; they observe, ' This *mudrā* is indicative of astonishment (*vismaya*) and reflection(*vitarka*). The eyeballs are turned upwards and the whole expression is one of deliberation in which an awareness of the immediate surroundings is absent. Satisfaction beams on the face.' The story of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga is often narrated at length in the Brahmanical and Buddhist literature and the most suggestive moment in it is that in which the young Brahmacārī beholds a maiden for the first time ; the artist has chosen this moment and has very

innocence by referring to the woman with the forefingers of his two hands directed towards her,' while the standing one, the owner of the house, ' is angrily asking the accused to explain his conduct, threatening him with the forefinger of his upraised hand.'

effectively portrayed the pleasant wonder of the unsophisticated youth when sex-consciousness dawns in his mind.[1] The hand-poses which are depicted in Figures 6 and 7 in Plate No. III of this book should be studied now. The former figure which is based on the bronze statuette of Harpocrates (thus identified by Marshall) unearthed at Taxila shows the right hand of the child-god raised towards his mouth with the index finger placed on the chin in token of silence. The latter is sketched from a four-armed Viṣṇu image from Khajuraho whose front left hand is shown in a similar pose (the index finger here more suggestively touches the left corner of the lower lip); this is one of the most unique representations of Viṣṇu, and no text is known to me which enjoins that Viṣṇu is to be shown in such a pose. Upadhyay and Agrawala have very correctly drawn our attention in their article mentioned above to the *Kumārasambhava* passage which describes Nandī guarding the entrance of Śiva's place of meditation : " Nandī posted at the entrance of the bower, having a golden staff resting against his forearm, bade the Gaṇas to observe stillness with a gesture in which a finger of his right hand touched his mouth." [2] The bronze image of Hanumān, one of the four (the others being of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā) belonging to the temple of Shermadevī in the Tinnevelly district of the Madras State, shows his right hand placed upon the mouth, indicating the attitude of silent respect and ungrudging obedience of the devoted follower.[3]

[1] For the identification of this relief, *cf.* ' A relief of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga in the Mathura Museum', in *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. IV, No. I, pp. 62-4, Pl. XI; see also V. S. Agrawala, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Mathura Museum*, p. 42, Pl. XVI, Fig. 53.

[2] *Kumārasambhavam*, III, 41 : *Latāgṛhadvāragato'tha Nandī vāmaprakoṣṭhārpitahemavetraḥ* | *Mukhārpitaikāṅgulisaṃjñayaiva mā cāpalāyeti gaṇān vyanaiṣīt*. For the Harpocrates figure, *cf.* Marshall, *A Guide to Taxila*, p. 79, Pl. XV ; according to him, it is a late Hellenistic work. Vōgel identified the Ṛṣyaśṛṅga figure as ' probably a Yakṣa of a fashionable type,' suggesting that its pose resembled that of Harpocrates (*Ars Asiatica*, Vol. XV, p. 102), but this suggestion was rightly challenged by Agrawala and Upadhyay. For the Khajuraho Viṣṇu, see *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. I, p. 103, Pl. XXX.

[3] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. LIV. Another bronze figure of the same monkey-god hailing from Rameswaram portrays the identical pose.

Figure 21 in Plate II of this book is also another unnamed hand-pose where two fingers (index and thumb) are put inside the mouth in order to produce some whistling sound; the left hand is shown in that pose, while the right one waves high one end of the scarf worn by the figure. This drawing is based on a deva figure from Bharhut relief depicting the victory of Buddha over Māra (Barua, *Bharhut*, Bk. III, Pl. XXXVII). Exactly the same posture is shown on similar figures appearing in the scene of Buddha's birth in numerous reliefs from Gandhāra. The waving of the cloth is called *cellukhepa* in Pāli and is expressive of the great joy of the waver; the pose of the left hand, thus, is also of similar import. Even now boys, who are able to do it, use the above expressive pose to give vent to their joy by whistling. I may say that I have not met with any such pose in my study of the Brahmanical sculptures of different periods.

A somewhat detailed account has been given of the various hand-poses which are usually depicted in the images of the Hindu divinities and their attendants. The *bhūsparśa* or *bhūmisparśa* pose, in which the left hand rests on the lap with palm outward and the right with the palm inward touches the seat below, is particularly associated with Buddhist iconography. This pose illustrates the story of Buddha's calling the earth as his witness for testifying to his right to sit on the Vajrāsana under the Bodhi tree, which was challenged by Māra, just prior to his enlightenment. Grünwedel has remarked that 'certain hand-postures attached themselves to particular legends and the position of the hands in the chief figure becomes an indication of the legend' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 177). This observation is mainly applicable to the two, *viz.*, the *dharmacakra-* and the *bhūsparśa-mudrā*; both these were principally connected with Buddhism, and in developed Mahāyāna iconography they were the typical hand-poses of the two Dhyānī Buddhas, *viz.*, Vairocana and Akṣobhya respectively. The nearest approach of the latter pose in Hindu iconography is to be found in the two-armed figure of Nara in the Deogarh relief already noted, where the god is seated in the *ardha-*

paryaṅka fashion on a raised seat with the index and the middle fingers of his left hand touching his seat; but unlike the Buddhist mode of representing the *mudrā*, we find here the palm of the hand turned outward.

A few remarks about the complicated hand-poses which are reproduced by me in Plate V are necessary. I have already shown that these were mainly ritualistic in character, adopted by the *sādhaka* in the performance of his *sādhanā* or the *bhakta* in the worship of the deity of his choice. I have selected at random the eight *mudrās* from the manuscript text in order to show how the particular poses in which the hands of the *sādhaka* are shown in the most intricate processes of his *sādhanā* are in keeping with the ideas contained in the *mantras* uttered by him in each case. The eight *mantras* associated with the eight figures are thus laid down in the text: 1. *Oṃ vajrānalahandaha-pathamabhañjana huṃ*; 2. *Oṃ vajrapāśa hrīṃ*; 3. *Oṃ vajrapuṣpe svāhā*; 4. *Oṃ vajradvī(dī)pe svāhā*; 5. *Oṃ vajrāṃkuśa ja*; 6. *Oṃ vajranaivedya svāhā*; 7. *Oṃ sarvvatathāgatasiddhivajrasamaya tiṣṭha eṣastvāṃ dhārayāmi vajrasattva hi hi hi hi humiti*; 8. *Oṃ sarvvavit vajradhūpe trāṃ*. Now, the ideological association of the *mudrās* numbering 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8 with the different *mantras* is not difficult to follow; Nos. 4, 5 and 6 in some mystic way may contain the outline representation of a lamp, an elephant-goad and a pot of offering. It may be noted here that the *nivedya* or *naivedya mudrā* outlined by Poduval is closely similar to No. 6 in my plate; I may also observe that the Brahman priests, when they dedicate any *naivedya* (offering) to the deity, usually adopt this *mudrā* and taking a flower with the tips of the index fingers of the two interlocked hands drop it on the *naivedya*. The waving flames of fire, the hands tied by a noose (*pāśa*) and the offering of a palmful of flowers to the deity are characteristically expressed by Figs. 1, 2 and 3; Fig. 7 expresses the invocation of the success attained by all Tathāgatas, symbolised here by the *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā* (bell, does it also indicate time?) and asking it to stay with the *sādhaka*, as he holds these symbols in his hand; Fig. 8 simply shows the incense-

burner with smoke issuing from it held in the right hand, the left hand being placed below.[1]

The *Dhruvaberas* or the principal types of Viṣṇu images are grouped under three broad heads, *viz.*, *sthānaka* (standing), *āsana* (seated) and *śayana* (recumbent), in the *Vaikhānasāgama* text. The images of the other gods and their attendants also are represented in one or other of the first two attitudes, the recumbent ones being very rare. Several varieties of images also are to be found in dancing or flying pose, the latter being mostly used in the representation of such accessories as the Vidyādharas and others. In the case of standing images, different kinds of stance are met with, while there are also numerous varieties of sitting postures in which the seated images are shown. Four different standing poses were usually shown by the Indian iconographer in representing the *sthānakamūrtis*; they are called *bhaṅgas*, *i.e.*, 'flexions' or 'attitudes'. These are *samabhaṅga* or *samapāda*, *ābhaṅga*, *tribhaṅga* and *atibhaṅga*. The first denotes the equipoised body where ' the right and left of the figure are disposed symmetrically, the *sūtra* or plumb line passing through the navel, from the crown of the head to a point midway between the heels ' (A. N. Tagore). Thus, the weight of the whole body is equally distributed on both the legs and the poise is firm and erect, there being no bend in the body. Many are the Indian images which are shown in this attitude, the most typical being the early and late figures of the Jain Tīrthaṅkaras whose hands also hang straight down by their sides without showing the least bend in them (*kāyotsarga*). The Brahmanical and Buddhist divinities, when they are depicted in this attitude, usually

[1] The text from which these poses as well as the *mantras* are taken is a late 18th century Vajrayāna manuscript collected by P. C. Bagchi from Nepal. In its colophon I read, ' *Iti śrīmacchākyarāja-durgatipariśodhanamukyākhyāna heguri(?) samāpta* l *Samvat 915 pauṣaśukle ekādasī bṛhaspativāra kunhu(?)* l *Suvarṇapanārimahānagare śāntighaṭamahāsthāne hemākaramahāvihāraveṣṭita taṃ lācchito(?) rathyākāvāhārayā(?) śrīvajrācārya nāmasaṃgīti nāthaja(?) tha(?) durgatipariśodhanasamādhi-thamanam(?) coyājura(?) śubhaḥ* ' The language is corrupt Sanskrit and there seems to be some inter-mixture of Newarī in it. The date 915 Newar Samvat corresponds to c. 1795 A.D.

show various dispositions of their hands, either according to the nature of the ideas expressed by them, or according to the type of the weapon or emblem held by them. Sirimā-devatā and many other Vyantara-devatās on the Bharhut railing stand in the *samabhaṅga* attitude. Figures 7, 8 and 20 in Plate I (varieties of Śiva on Ujjayinī and Audumbara coins), Figure 6 in Plate XI (Gaja-Lakṣmī on some coins of Azilises), Figure 9 in Plate X (Mahāsena on Huvishka's coins) and Figure 1 in Plate XI (Gaja-Lakṣmī on a Bhita seal) are shown in the above pose. *Ābhaṅga* is that form of standing pose ' in which the plumb-line or the centre line, from the crown of the head to a point midway between the heels, passes slightly to the right of the navel ' (Tagore). In other words, a slight bend both in the upper and the lower halves of the figure is definitely perceptible in this form. Many also are the Indian images which are represented in this pose; Figures 13 and 19 in Plate I (Śiva on some Ujjayinī coins and on some coins of Wema Kadphises), Figures 2 and 8 in Plate XI and 2 in Plate IX (composite god on a nicolo seal, Umā on some coins of Huvishka, a goddess with *cakra* on Maues' coins), Figures 15-18 in Plate IX (Śiva on a square copper coin of Maues and on a few coins of Huvishka), Figure 7 in Plate XI on a seal of the Śaka period (it has been identified as Poseidon trampling on a bull-shaped river god), the figures of Skanda-Kumāra and Viśākha on Huvishka's coins reproduced in Plate X, Figure 6, Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī (?) in Plate IX, Figure 3 and in Plate XI, Figure 3 (Gaṅgā rides on the elephantine Makara on the reverse side of the Tiger-slayer type coins of Samudragupta and Sarasvatī (?) appears on the coins of Narendravinata, a Bengal king of the late Gupta period) all these can be described as standing in the *ābhaṅga pose*. The *tribhaṅga* pose has been described by A. N. Tagore as one in which ' the centre line passes through the left (or right) pupil, the middle of the chest, the left (or right) of the navel, down to the heels. The lower limbs, from the hips to the feet, are displaced to the right (or left) of the figure, the trunk between the hips and neck, to the left (or

right), while the head leans towards the right (or left).' It should be noted that the number of bends in the figure is three and so the name is quite appropriate. The pose may not be as common as the other two, but it is also used in the iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India, especially in the representations of goddesses and other attendants of principal deities. Ṛṣyaśṛṅga on the Mathura railing (Pl. IV, Fig. 3) and the goddess on certain copper coins of Azes, tentatively identified by me as Durgā (Pl. VIII, Fig. 6), are undoubtedly depicted in the *tribhaṅga* pose. *Atibhaṅga* has rightly been described by A. N. Tagore as really an emphasised form of the *tribhaṅga*, the sweep of the *tribhaṅga* curve being considerably enhanced. The upper portion of the body above the limbs below are thrown to right or left, backwards or forwards, like ' a tree caught in a storm '. This type is comparatively rarely represented in Indian art and is used in the depiction of dynamic action of the divinity; several *ugra* (terrific) forms of Śaiva and Śākta deities and the various *krodha-devatās* of Vajrayana Buddhism are usually depicted in this manner.

Reference may be made here to the *ālīḍha* and *pratyālīḍha* poses in which some *sthānakamūrtis* are shown. *Ālīḍhapada*, which is sometimes loosely called *ālīḍhāsana*, denotes that particular mode of standing usually sideways in which the right knee is thrown to the front and the leg retracted and the left leg is diagonally stretched behind, while pratyālīḍhapada is just its opposite; both these attitudes are adopted by persons shooting arrows, and one of the earliest depictions of these poses is to be found in the two arrow-shooting figures of Ūṣā and Pratyūṣā, goddesses of dawn, accompanying Sūrya in a pillar of the old stone railing at Bodh Gaya. In a fragmentary Gandhāra relief in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Sūrya is seated on a chariot and one of the arrow-shooting figures is present, the other being broken. A very early representation of the *pratyālīḍha* pose is outlined in the drawing No. 25 in Plate I, which is based on a figure appearing on some punch-marked coins among the Purnea hoard. Śiva appearing on the Sirkap

bronze seal of Śivarakṣita and on some copper coins of Maues (Fig. 5 in Pl. XI and Fig. 18 in Pl. IX) is shown in the same posture, though he is not depicted as shooting arrows. *Tantrasāra* describes the Brahmanical goddess Tārā, ideologically similar to the same goddess in the Vajrayāna pantheon and most probably derived from it, as ' fierce and standing in the *pratyālīḍha* attitude ' (*pratyālīḍhapadāṃ ghorām*). The standing pose shown in Figure 28, Plate I (drawing from a figurine on a few punch-marked coins in the Purnea hoard) is very interesting. The right knee flexed outwards with the right leg crossing the left leg firmly planted reminds us of the posture in which some Yakṣiṇīs on Bharhut and Mathura railings are depicted; some mediaeval and modern images of Kṛṣṇa in several of his *līlāmūrtis* are also shown in this pose.[1]

Mention may be made here of the various poses or *sthānas* in which pictures of gods and men are to be shown, according to the *Viṣṇudharmottara*. There is at first a list of nine major *sthānas* detailed in Book III, Ch. 39, verses 1-32. Their names are *ṛjvāgata*, *anṛju*, *sācīkṛtaśarīra*, *ardhavilocana*, *pārśvāgata*, *parāvṛtta*, *pṛṣṭhāgata*, *purāvṛtta* and *samānata*. In verses 40-42 of the same chapter are enumerated as many as thirteen *sthānas* on the basis of the law of ' fore-shortening ' (*kṣaya-vṛddhi*). These are *ṛjvāgata*, *anṛju*, *madhyārdha*, *ardha*, *ardhārdha*, *sācīkṛtamukha*, *nata*, *gaṇḍaparāvṛtta*, *pṛṣṭhāgata*, *pārśvāgata*, *ullepa*, *calita*, *uttāna* and *valita*. The list may have been added later, for it is clear that it is an enlarged form of the earlier list. The above poses are characterised by the position of the legs and feet which are varied by a series of motions like *vaiśākha*, *ālīḍha* and *pratyālīḍha* (poses peculiar to archers—*Tatra vaiśākhamālīḍhaṃ pratyālīḍhaṃ ca dhanvinām*), *citragomutrakagata* (?) and *viṣama* (peculiar to wielders of sword and shield), *calita*, *khalita* (*valita* ?), *āyasta* (*āyata* ?) and *ālīḍhaikapada* (peculiar in turn to the holders of a spear, a

[1] The names of the 4 principal standing poses described above are from A. N. Tagore's ' *Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy* ' (published by the Indian Society of Oriental Art), pp. 11-13.

tomara, i.e., an iron club, a stone and a *bhindipāla, i.e.*, a small javelin or dart), *savalgita* (in a sort of gallop ?—pose peculiar to the persons who hold a wheel, a trident, a mace, a *kuṇapa, i.e.*, a kind of spear). These varieties of the positions of legs and feet are in addition to the two principal groups of standing poses, *viz.*, *sama* and *arddhasama* or *asama* which mean ' well-planted ' and ' in motion ' respectively (*Samaścārddhasamāḥ pādāḥ susthitāni calāni ca* | *Samāsamapadasthaṃ ca dvividhaṃ sthānakaṃ bhavet*). *Samapāda* is also known as the stance which is *pādabhūyiṣṭha* (feet firmly and squarely planted?), while the other type (*i.e.*, *asama* or *arddhasama*) should be (known as) *maṇḍala* (in rotatory motion) : *Tadgatvā padabhūyiṣṭhaṃ sthānaṃ samapadaṃ smṛtam* | *Maṇḍalañca dvitīyaṃ syāt*. . . . . One foot firmly planted, the other shown in moving posture, is really the *arddha-samapāda* or *ekasamapāda*, as seems to be the sense in the description of the standing pose of the female figures in the following passage. The author of the *Viṣṇudharmottara* thus describes the attitude in which the female figures should be shown—' one of the legs (should be) in the *samāsthāna* (straightly planted), the other in the *vidgala* (does it refer to the manner of showing one leg crossing the other firmly planted leg?—*cf.* Fig. 28 in Plate I, it is a female figure as is clear from the big braid behind the head), the body should be shown in a graceful manner, sometimes held by supports, charming with its grace and dalliance, with the front part of the loins being broad and spacious, with one leg firm and well-adjusted—thus should a sage paint a female figure.'[1]

[1] The extracts translated above are from *Viṣṇudharmottara*, Bk. III, Ch. 39, verses 39-50. The description of the poses is introduced there to show how they can be painted with the help of ' decrease and increase ' (*kṣaya* and *vṛddhi*, translated by St. Kramrisch as ' the science of foreshortening'). Kramrisch's translation of many of these passages is inaccurate. Verses 49-50 read—*Ekapādasamasthānaṃ dvitīyena tu vidgalam* | *Sarīraṃ ca salīlaṃ syāt sāvaṣṭambhaiḥ kvaciddhṛtam* (in the edited text the reading is *kvaciddrutam* which is evidently incorrect)‖ *Līlāvilāsavibhrāntaṃ viśālajaghanasthalam* | *Sthiraikapādavinyāsaṃ strīrūpaṃ vilikhedbudhaḥ*. These have been translated by her in this way—' The flight (*lit.* running away) of stout men is in some cases depicted with one leg in a straight position and with the other (placed in such a way that) the wanton body should be (shown) with the neck stretched forward. The learned painter should paint a female figure with one foot calmly advanced, with the part about the hips and loins broad and flurried, on account of amorous dalliance.' There can be little doubt that both the couplets, my translation of which is given above, describe the standing pose of a female figure. The passages are bristling with technical terms, many of which are not correctly printed in the text; the significance of a good many of them again is unknown to us at present and so the task of translating them is extremely difficult. I have not attempted to translate literally some of the terms quoted by me.

Only a small number of the multifarious poses noted above from the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, however, though they could all be painted by skilled artists on canvas, wall or such other objects, were actually used by the image-makers of ancient and mediæval India in the depiction of the cult-deities and their attendants. Moreover, it was the lyrical painting (*vaiṇika*) which was very ' rich in ideal proportions and in poses ' (*pramāṇasthāna-lambhāḍhya*) and which dealt with ' happenings on earth, not with the iconography of the gods.' As Coomaraswamy remarks, ' the action will require the representation of many different positions and movements, not merely the frontal pose appropriate to the image of a god ' (*J. A. O. S.*, Vol. 52, 1932, p. 15). That the ' frontal pose ' was the most appropriate one in the depiction of the cult deity is proved by the 51st verse of the chapter on Pratimālakṣaṇa in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* ; it says that the image which leans to the left side causes harm to the wife and that leaning to the right diminishes the span of life (of the donor ;—*Vāmāvanatā patnīṃ dakṣiṇavinatā hinastyāyuḥ*).

Various kinds of *āsanas* are prescribed for different types of divinities in the iconographic texts. The *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā* (Ch. 30) mentions as many as eleven principal *āsanas*, such as *cakra, padma, kūrma, māyūra, kaikkuṭa, vīra, svastika, bhadra, siṃha, mukta* and *gomukha* (*Cakraṃ padmāsanaṃ kūrmaṃ māyūraṃ kaikkuṭaṃ tathā* | *Vīrāsanaṃ svastikaṃ ca bhadraṃ siṃhāsanaṃ tathā* ‖ *Muktāsanaṃ gomukhaṃ ca mukhyānyetāni Nārada*). After naming them, the author describes each type of the sitting posture in detail ; all these are evidently yogic *āsanas* adopted by a yogī as aids to the concentration of his mind. It should be noted that in this list some can be understood to mean the particular animal or object whose name is associated with them. Thus,

kūrmāsana in one context may mean that it is the tortoise which serves as the seat (of a particular god or goddess—*cf.* the river goddess Yamunā who is *kūrmāsanā*), while in another it would indicate that type of sitting pose in which ' the legs are crossed so as to make the heels come under the gluteals (*Gūḍhaṃ nipīḍya gulphābhyāṃ vyutkrameṇa samāhitaḥ । Etatkūrmāsanaṃ proktaṃ yogasiddhikaraṃ paraṃ*). The earliest example of this sitting pose, as I have elsewhere suggested, is to be found in the seated prototypes of Śiva-Paśupati on some Mohenjo-daro and Harappa seals. *Padmāsana* may very well signify a lotus as the seat of the deity, but as a particular type of sitting posture of a yogī it can be described as one in which ' the two legs are kept crossed so that the feet are brought to rest on the thighs' (*Urvorupari saṃsthāpya ubhe pādatale sukham । Padmāsanamidaṃ proktaṃ . . . . .*). The *kukkuṭāsana* as a sitting posture is a variety of *padmāsana*, where the whole weight of the body rests on two arms placed on the ground on both sides, the body thus hanging in the air (*Padmāsanamadhiṣṭhāya jānvantaravinissṛtau । Karau bhūmau niveśyaitad vyomasthaḥ kukkuṭāsanam*). When the thighs are placed together and the left foot rests upon the right thigh and the left thigh on the right foot it is known as *vīrāsana* (*Ekatroruṇī saṃsthāpya pādamekamathetaram । uruṃ pāde niveśyaitadvīrāsanamudāhṛtam*). In the *bhadrāsana*, the heels of the legs which cross each other are placed under the testes and the two big toes of the feet are held by the hands. Rao says that 'in the *siṃhāsana* the legs are crossed as in the *kūrmāsana;* the palms of the hands, with the fingers kept stretched out, rest supinely upon the thigh, while the mouth is kept open and the eyes are fixed upon the tip of the nose' (*Nāsāgra-nyastanayano vyāttaraktra ṛjussudhīḥ*). A few of the eleven yogic *āsanas* as mentioned in the *Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā* have been described above; many more are to be found in other texts. The *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* while commenting on Patañjali's *Yoga-sūtra*, II. 46 (*sthirasukhamāsanam*) names as many as thirteen main varieties of Yogic *āsanas*: *padmāsana, vīrāsana, bhadrāsana, svastikāsana, daṇḍāsana,*

sopāśraya, paryaṅka, krauñcaniṣadana, hastiniṣadana, uṣṭraniṣadana, samasaṃsthāna, sthirasukha and *yathāsukha*. Some names in this list are the same as in the *Ahirbudhnya* one, but others are different. The *sopāśraya* variety here evidently refers to the type of yogic *āsana* in which the aid of a *yogapaṭṭa* is necessary. The commentary has been unanimously dated by Sanskritists in the 4th century A.D., and it shows that all these varieties were well-known to the Indians before that date.[1] The *Niruktatantra*, as quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma*, refers to innumerable *āsanas* (as many as 84 lacs), and specially selects two among them, *viz.*, *siddhāsana* and *kamalāsana*. But in the representations of the deities and their accessories, very few of them are actually used. The most commonly depicted sitting posture among the above is the *padmāsana* which is illustrated by Fig. 5 in Plate III and Fig. 16 in Plate II. *Vīrāsana* is the mode in which the Indians usually sit and is illustrated by Figures 15 and 18 in Plate II (No. 15 from an Ujjayinī coin, No. 18 from a Bharhut relief). The Aihole figure of Viṣṇu, described by T. A. G. Rao as *vīrāsanamūrti*, does not actually sit in the *vīrāsana* mode, but is in a pose full of ease, which is known as *sukhāsana*, where one leg, generally the left one, rests flat on the seat while the right knee is raised upwards from it and the right arm is stretched out on the raised knee.[2] The figure of Śiva seated on his mount in Figure 12, Plate IX, is also depicted in a pose somewhat similar to that of Aihole Viṣṇu (it is from a gold coin of Śaśāṅka in the Indian Museum, Calcutta). A yogic *āsana* which is sometimes to be found in the representations of deities but which is not included in the list given above is the *utkūṭikāsana* where one sits with heels kept close to the bottom and with the back slightly curved and the forearms

[1] Prof. H. D. Bhattacharya has kindly drawn my attention to this passage.

[2] For the Aihole Viṣṇu figure, see T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. XXX. On the obverse of the coins of Narendravinata, the king is shown as seated on a couch in an almost similar pose, the left knee being flexed upwards and the right leg bent at the knee resting on the seat. This pose is also sometimes described as *mahārājalilā*. The Siṃhanāda variety of Avalokiteśvara and the Mañjuvara one of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattvas are usually depicted in this pose.

resting on the knees raised above the seat. In order to keep the knees firm in the position described, a cloth band known as *yogapaṭṭa* is tied round the raised knees (Pl. IV, Fig. 5). This sitting pose is used in some images of seated Kevala Narasiṃha (*cf.* the Halebidu figure illustrated by T. A. G. Rao in his book, Vol. I, Pl. XLII) and of Lakulīśa, the founder of the Pāśupata sect. Figure 2 in Plate IV shows a Yakṣa, found at Maholi near Mathura and now in the Mathura Museum, who has a band passing round his raised left knee and his projecting belly. *Paryaṅkāsana* can be understood in the sense of a sitting posture in which both the legs are made to dangle down from whatever type of seat the figure sits on; this type of sitting posture is sometimes curiously described as 'seated in a European fashion.' Seated figures of Maitreya in mediaeval Buddhist art are very frequently depicted in that mode; the figure of Ambikā on the reverse side of some coins of the Chandragupta-Kumāradevī type sits on her lion mount in this manner (Pl X, Fig. 8). *Vajraparyaṅka, baddhapadmāsana and vajrāsana* —all seem to denote the type of sitting attitude similar to *padmāsana*. The *Tantrasāra* describes *vajrāsana* as a kind of *āsana* in which the feet are placed on the thighs one upon another with the toes shown upwards and on which the hands are placed (*Ūrvoḥ pādau kramānnyasya jānunoḥ prāṅmukhāṅgulī | Karau nidadhyādākhyātaṃ vajrāsanamanuttamam*). The Vajrayāna *sādhanas* describe a type of Buddha image known as Vajrāsana Buddha where the god is seated in the above pose with this difference that only his left hand with palm upwards is placed on his lap and the right touches the lotus-seat on which he is seated (*bhūsparśamudrā*). The oblong seat beneath the Bodhi-tree is also described as *Vajrāsana* or the diamond throne in Buddhist texts. One of the commonest types of sitting modes is the *arddhaparyaṅkāsana*, known also as *lalitāsana* or *lalitākṣepa*, in which one leg, usually the left, is tucked upon the seat, while the right one dangles down along it. Many Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain deities who are profusely endowed with ornaments are often depicted in this pose. In the couch

type coins of Chandragupta II, the king is seated in this graceful pose with his right leg tucked up on the seat (a couch, *paryaṅka*) and the left leg hanging down.[1]

The word *āsana* can also mean a seat or even a pedestal; in the latter sense the word *pīṭha* is frequently used. Thus *Padmapīṭha* would indicate the lotus seat on which the deities are often seated. T. A. G. Rao refers to five different kinds of such *āsanas* as mentioned in the *Suprabhedāgama*, viz., *anantāsana, siṃhāsana, yogāsana, padmāsana* and *vimalāsana*. 'According to Chandrajñāna, *anantāsana* is a triangular seat, *siṃhāsana* rectangular, *vimalāsana* hexagonal, *yogāsana* octagonal,and *padmāsana* circular.' But the manner in which reference is made to these five types of *āsanas* in the text proves that these were detached *pīṭhas* which were used on particular occasions for placing the image on them. The *Suprabhedāgama* writes, '*anantāsana* should be used as the seat for the image when it has to witness amusements, *siṃhāsana* when it has to be bathed, *yogāsana* during invocation, *padmāsana* during the conduct of worship, and *vimalāsana* when the offerings are offered.' Rao describes four types of *āsanas* or *pīṭhas*, viz., *bhadrapīṭha* (*bhadrāsana*), *kūrmāsana, pretāsana* and *siṃhāsana*. The height of the first is divided into 16 parts, 'of which one forms the thickness of the *upāna* or the basal layer, four of the *jagatī* or the next higher layer, three of the *kumuda*, one of the *paṭṭikā*, three of the *kaṇṭha*, one of the second *paṭṭikā*, two of the broader *mahāpaṭṭikā* and one of the *ghṛtavārī*, the topmost layer.''[2] The *bhadrāsana*

[1] J. Allan, *C.C.G.D.B.M.*, Pl. VI, Figs. 8, 9.

[2] The *Matsyapurāṇa* (ch. 262, vv. 1-4) also says that the height of the *pīṭha* should be divided into 16 parts, of which one part should be buried underground, then the part known as *jagatī* should consist of four parts, above it *vṛtta* one part, then *paṭala* also one part, above that *kaṇṭha* three parts, then *kaṇṭhapaṭṭa* three parts, *ūrddhvapaṭṭa* two parts and *paṭṭikā* one part; all the parts of the *pīṭha* from the *jagatī* to the topmost layer *paṭṭikā* should be shown above ground (*nirgama*). Parallel to the surface of the *paṭṭikā* should be made the *praṇālaka* or the outward projecting channel for draining out water poured on the top of the *liṅga* or *arcā* which is placed on the *pīṭha*. In the case of the *liṅga*, however, its shaft goes through the whole length of the *pīṭha* along the hole carved in the centre of the latter. The *Matsyapurāṇa* mentions as many as ten different kinds of *pīṭhas* which were used for

referred to by Varāhamihira in connection with the preliminary consecration (*adhivāsa*) of an image does not seem to have been such an elaborate *āsana* or *pīṭha;* Utpala simply explains the term as *rājāsana* (perhaps he means a royal throne by this term).[1] According to the Tamil work *Śaivasamayaneri, kūrmāsana* is to be made of wood and is to be of oval shape; it should be four *aṅgulas* high and twelve *aṅgulas* broad, and the face and feet of a tortoise should be shown on it. *Pretāsana* is really a yogic *āsana*, in which the whole body lies rigid and motionless like a corpse; but when Cāmuṇḍā, one of the Seven Mothers (*mātṛkā*) is described as *pretāsanā*, the iconographers represent her as seated on a dead body. Rao surmises that here 'the Yogic āsana has materialised into the above curious carcass-seat.' But the association of a dead body with this very terrific aspect of the Devī is certainly not curious at all when we know that she is endowed with all that is terrific and hideous in mythology and art; she is described as *piśitāśanā* (carrion-eater), holder of a *khaṭvāṅga* (the osseous shaft of the forearm capped by a skull) and a fleshless skeleton goddess (*kaṅkālī*). *Siṃhāsana* is a four-legged seat usually rectangular in shape; its legs are carved in the shape of four lions, thus laying special stress on its name. Some ancient and mediaeval Buddha figures have been found, below whose seat are carved one or two lions; but this has been explained as symbolising the idea of Gotama Buddha as the lion of the Śākyas (Śākyasiṃha).

Śayana or fully recumbent images of Hindu divinities are extremely rare. All that are known to me are principally associated with the Viṣṇuite pantheon, though in some late mediaeval and modern Śakti images, such as those of Kālī, Śiva is depicted lying under the feet of the principal deity like Mūyaḷaka or Apasmārapuruṣa (personifying the evil of ignorance) wriggling

placing different kinds of deities; these were *sthaṇḍilā, vāpi, yakṣī, vedī, maṇḍalā, pūrṇacandrā, vajrā, padmā, arddhaśaśī* and *trikonā*. A description of each of these is given next (ch. 262, vv. 6-18).

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 59, v. 7: *Maṇḍapamadhye sthaṇḍilamupalipyāstīrye sikatayātha kuśaiḥ | Bhadrāsanakṛtaśīrṣopadhānapādāṃ nyaset pratimām.*

beneath the feet of Śiva Naṭarāja. Again, in some iconographic reliefs (showing a definitely sectarian bias) a god of one sect is sometimes shown lying prone under the feet of a deity belonging to a different sect. Thus, in the Śarabhamūrti of Śiva, Narasiṃha, *i.e.*, the man-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu, is shown underneath the curious hybrid form of Śiva as Śarabha; in some Vajrayāna Buddhist images, Gaṇapati the cult deity of one of the five principal Brahmanical cults is also depicted in this attitude in the pedestals of such deities as Parṇaśavarī, Aparājitā and others (in this case, Gaṇapati may symbolise Vighnarāja, the obstacle in the way of the *sādhaka*, of which he is the remover according to the Hindu mythology, whence his name Vighnāntaka). If we leave them aside, all of which are in the way of subordinate figures, the two principal types of fully recumbent images belonging to the Brahmanical and Buddhist pantheon are those of Śeṣaśayana of Viṣṇu and the Mahāparinirvāṇamūrti of Buddha. Jalaśāyin and Vaṭapatraśāyin aspects of Viṣṇu, which are ideologically similar to his Śeṣaśayanamūrti, are also represented in this particular attitude; Jalaśāyin is the same as Śeṣaśayana, while the Vaṭapatraśāyin aspect shows the god as an infant lying on a banyan leaf floating in the waters, and sucking one of his big toes. The Śeṣaśayana or Anantaśayana depicts the adult god recumbent on the folds of Ādi or Ananta Nāga, the hoods of the latter serving as a canopy over his head; there are several other figures shown round him, the chief among whom is Lakṣmī who is shampooing his legs. In the terracotta relief from the brick temple at Bhitargaon (5th century A.D.) and the stone relief from the stone temple at Deogarh (6th century A.D.), the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha in a fighting mood are also shown by his side. This type of Viṣṇu image is one of the commonest images enshrined in the main sanctum of the South Indian Vaiṣṇava shrines of some antiquity and importance; there it is specially designated as Raṅganātha or Raṅgasvāmī. Really however, this type is nothing but an elaborate plastic representation of the cosmic god Nārāyaṇa who is one of the constituent elements comprising the developed cult picture of

Bhāgavatism or Vaiṣṇavism, the others being Vāsudeva and Viṣṇu. The *Manusaṃhitā* (I, 10) and the *Mahābhārata* (XII, 341) record that the waters were called Nāras because they were the sons of Nara, and since they were the first resting place of Prajāpati, he came to be known as Nārāyaṇa.[1] The ideology underlying the concept of Nārāyaṇa even goes back to the age of the *Ṛgveda* where the original principle known as Viśvakarman is described in this manner: 'That which is beyond the sky, beyond the earth, beyond gods and spirits,—what earliest embryo did the waters contain, in which all the gods were beheld? The waters contained that earliest embryo in which all the gods were collected. One (receptacle) rested upon the navel of the unborn, wherein all beings stood.'[2] This explanation of the recumbent images of Viṣṇu shows the ideological difference that exists between them and the Mahāparinirvāṇa images of Buddha. The Anantaśayanamūrti of Viṣṇu, sculptured in one of the side niches of the Deogarh temple just referred to, is one of the finest presentations of this motif in Indian art. Farnell detected in it a real resemblance to the Stockholm Endymion, and Smith endorsed his view; the latter scholar, after reproducing both the figures side by side, observed, 'The peculiar character of the Gupta sculpture seems to me to be undoubtedly derived from Greece. There is no direct copying of Hellenistic models as there was in the Gandhāra school, but I feel sure that somehow or other the Gupta artist drank at the fountain of Greek inspiration.'[3] Smith himself says in the same connection that the Deogarh relief is thoroughly Indian in its theme and treatment, although the artist 'has felt and understood the European sculptor's conception of a beautiful pose.' It should be noted, however, that the

[1] *Āpo nārā iti proktā āpo vai narasūnavaḥ* | *Tā yadasyāyanaṃ pūrvaṃ tasmānnārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ*. The *Mahābhārata* couplet is in a slightly altered form:—*Nivṛttilakṣaṇo dharmastathābhyudayiko 'pi ca* | *Nārāṇāmayanaṃ khyātamahamekaḥ sanātanaḥ*‖ *Āpo nārā iti proktā āpo vai narasūnavaḥ* | *Ayanaṃ mama tatpūrvamato Nārāyaṇo hyaham.*

[2] *R. V.*, X, 82, 5 and 6; *Paro divā para enā pṛthivyā paro devebhirasurairyadasti* | *Kaṃ svidgarbhaṃ prathamaṃ dadhra āpo yatra devāḥ samapaśyanta viśve* | *Ajasya nābhāvadhyekamarpitaṃ yasmin viśvāni bhuvanāni tasthuḥ.*

[3] *Ost Asiatische Zeitschrift*, 1914, p. 25, Figs. 17 and 18.

resemblance (how far real it is, is a matter of opinion) exists only in the placing of the legs in both the figures; a careful scrutiny will show that the head, the attitude of the hands and many other features are entirely different in the two reliefs. It will be too much to say on the basis of a slight parallelism in the display of legs of two recumbent figures that the sculptor of one of them was indebted for his conception of the recumbent pose and its presentation to that of the other.

I have already referred to several *Nṛtyamūrtis* of Brahmanical deities like Śiva, Kṛṣṇa and others while explaining the hand-pose known as *daṇḍahasta* or *gajahasta*. Of them, those of Śiva are the most varied and remarkable. Śiva, according to the Hindu mythology, is a great master in the art of dancing. In fact, *nṛtyaśāstra* is specially associated with this great god. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, ch. 73, vv. 46-8) tells us that Maheśvara represents the science of dancing, as the various other sciences like *itihāsa* (history), *dhanurveda* (archery), *āyurveda* (medicine), *phalaveda* (fruit-culture), *pāñcarātra* (a religious system), *pāśupata* (another religious system), etc. are represented by Prajāpati, Śatakratu (Indra), Dhanvantari, Mahī (the Earth goddess), Saṃkarṣaṇa and Rudra respectively. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata mentions as many as one hundred and eight modes of dancing, and the Saivāgamas also state that Śiva knew the same number of dancing modes. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, ch. 2, vv. 1-9), the knowledge of iconography depends on the correct understanding of the rules of *Citra* (sculpture in the round, relievo and pictorial representation); a true mastery in the latter again is unattainable without a knowledge of the art of dancing, which again is supplementary to one's full acquaintance with the science of music.[1]

[1] Coomaraswamy says that 'certain of the dance poses possess not merely a general linguistic, but also a special hieratic significance. . . . Many of the gods are themselves dancers, and, in particular, the everlasting operation of creation, continuance and destruction—the Eternal Becoming, informed by All-pervading Energy—is marvellously represented in the dance of Śiva. He also exhibits dances of triumph and destruction.'—Coomaraswamy and Gopalakrishnayya, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

The 26th chapter of Book III of the same text deals with the names and descriptions of various types of hand poses which are adopted in the different modes of dance (*nṛtyahastavyavasthāvarṇana*). These names are :—*caturasra, vṛtta, laghumukha, arāla, khaṭakāmukha, āviddha, vakrasamvyāsva*(?), *recita, arddharecita, avahitthaḥ, pallavita, nitamba, keśavardhanī, latākhya, karihasta* (the same as *gajahasta or daṇḍahasta* discussed above), *pakṣoddyota, artha*(?)*vardhita, garuḍapakṣa, daṇḍapakṣa, ūrdhvamaṇḍalaja, pārśvamaṇḍalaja, pārśvārdhamaṇḍala, uromaṇḍala, iṣṭasvastika*(?), *avanī, padmakauśika, alipallava, ulvana, lalita* and *balita* (verses 8-13). To the above fairly formidable list will have to be added twenty-two *asaṃyuta*- and thirteen *saṃyuta-hastas*, the names of some of which are already familiar to us. I have referred earlier in this chapter to Poduval's division of the hand-poses into two groups, *viz., saṃyuta* and *asaṃyuta;* our text here names the constituents of each group. The following are the 22 *asaṃyutahastas* adopted by one expert in dancing :—*patākā, tripatāka, kartare(i)mukha, ardhacandra, aṭā(rā?)la, guru(śuka)tuṇḍa, muṣṭi, śikhira* (should be *śikhara*), *kapittha, khaṭakāmukha, sūcyardha, padmakośa, mṛgaśīrṣa, mṛṇḍa, lāṅgula, kālapadma, catura, bhramara, haṃsāsya, haṃsapakṣa, sandaṃśa* and *mukula* (verses 1-4). The thirteen *saṃyutahastas* are :—*añjali, kapota, karkaṭa, svastika, khaṭaka, vardhamāna, utsaṅga, niṣidha* or *niṣadha, dola, puṣpaputa, makara, gajadanta* and *avahittha* (*vardhamāna* is again mentioned after this, but that would enhance the number to 14 ; verses 5-7). The list given above is to a great extent similar to the various *nṛtyahastas* mentioned in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata and there is very little doubt that much of it, if not all, was borrowed from the same work. Nandikeśvara, the traditional author of the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* speaks of as many as 28 single (*asaṃyuta*) and 24 combined (*saṃyuta*) hand-poses (*hastas*). His list is not the same as the *Viṣṇudharmottara* list, inasmuch as it supplies us with a few names like *ardhapataka, mayūra, candrakalā, sarpaśīrṣa, siṃhamukha, tāmracūḍa* and *triśūla* in the case of the

asaṃyuta types (*mṛga* in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* list is omitted and *solapadma* in his list is probably the same as *kālapadma* in the other list) ; the *saṃyuta hastas* in the *Abhinayadarpaṇa* are more numerous, and new names, such as *Śiva-liṅga, kartarī-svastika, śakaṭa, śaṅkha, cakra, samputa, pāśa, kīlaka, matsya, kūrma, varāha, garuḍa, nāga-bandha, khaṭvā* and *bheruṇḍa* are included in the list which, however, omits four, viz., *vardhamāna, niṣidha, makara* and *gajadanta* from the *Viṣṇudharmottara* one (*khaṭaka* in the latter is a mistake for *kaṭaka* which is written as *kaṭaka-vardhana* in the former). These have been elaborately described in the *Abhinayadarpaṇa*, and the joint authors of *The Mirror of Gesture* have made elaborate comments on the description and have illustrated many of these hand-poses by drawings from old sculptures and from life (Coomaraswamy and Gopālakrishnāyya, *The Mirror of Gesture*, 2nd Edition, pp. 45 ff. and plates VII, VIII, XIV-XX). The names of some of these hand-poses were also used in designating several of the dancing modes which are described in detail in Bharata's work. The great temple of Śiva-Naṭarāja at Chidambaram contains well-arranged illustrations of these interesting dance poses and the artists appended fully descriptive labels to each.[1] But these sculptures, mainly carved on the walls flanking the passages in the great *gopurams* of the temple, are comparatively late—none of them dating from a period earlier than the 13th century A.D. ; again the reliefs illustrating the *karaṇas* contain mainly the figures of female dancers. The principal image of Śiva in the main sanctum of the temple, however, depicts him ' dancing his cosmic dance, the right foot trampling down Mūyaḷaka, the left raised in the *kuñcitapāda* with one right hand sounding the cosmic drum, the other in the *abhayahasta*,

[1] The inscribed dance sculptures in the temple were first noticed at some length in the *Madras Epigraphical Report* for 1914 ; but the account was not fully comprehensive. V. N. Naidu, S. Naidu and V. R. Pantulu, in their joint work on *Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇam*, published in 1936 by G. S. Press, Mount Road, Madras, have collected a good deal of information about them and have reproduced the 4th chapter, entitled Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇam, of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, and given the English translation thereof. Their reproduction of the photographs of the *karaṇas* with the English translation of the descriptive inscriptions, as well as the glossary explaining the highly technical terms furnished by them, is interesting.

with one left hand holding the fire and the other in *daṇḍahasta* pose.' [1] Numerous bronze replicas of the same type of dancing Śiva are found in Southern India, but most of them belong to the 14th or 15th century A.D. or even later. Much earlier figures of Śiva dancing in various ways have been found in the Brahmanical cave shrines at Ellora, and T. A. G. Rao has rendered useful service to students of iconography by recognising in them two of the *karaṇas* or dance poses described in detail in Bharata's work. Plates LXII and LXIII in his 2nd volume are reproductions of two Ellora panels which illustrate the *kaṭisama* and *lalita* modes of dance as described by Bharata. Several other South Indian bronze and stone figures of Śiva, of the mediaeval period, reproduced by him portray other dance poses such as *lalāṭa-tilaka*, *catura* and *talasaṃsphoṭita* as delineated in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Śiva dancing in the *catura* mode has been recognised in an early relief at Badami. The mediaeval dancing images of Śiva that have been found in Bengal usually show him ten-armed and dancing vigorously on the back of his mount Nandin; this fits well the *Matsyapurāṇa* passage which says that the god endowed with ten arms and wielding elephant hide should be shown dancing on his bull (259, 10-11; *Vaiśākhasthānakaṃ kṛtvā nṛtyābhinayasaṃsthitaḥ‖ Nṛtyan-daśabhujaḥ kāryo gajacarmadharastathā*). In much earlier Indian art, especially the Central Indian art of the Śuṅga period, many reliefs depict male and female dancers; Pl. II, Fig. 23, depicts two of the four dancing *apsarās* in the scene of Māra's defeat (with none of the *karaṇas* in the *Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇam* could I fully identify these two dance types). But, for the earliest Indian representation of dancing posture we shall have to go back to the art of the Indus Valley. Several female figurines,

[1] The *Aṃśumadbhedāgama* and *Uttarakāmikāgama* give a full description of this dance pose. The former names it as the first kind of dance and describes eight different other modes, though it says that in all there are 108 different kinds. The latter calls the Naṭarāja dance as *bhujaṅgatrāsa*; but the *bhujaṅgatrāsita*, *karaṇa* No. 24 in the list of 108 dances in the Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇa chapter of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, is somewhat different.

bronze and terracotta ones, have been discovered at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, which have been explained by Marshall and others as dancers. But the most interesting discovery, in this connection, is that of a mutilated figure of dark grey slate at Harappa, which has been described by Marshall as the statue of a male dancer. The pose of the dancer is full of movement and swing; he stands on his right leg with the body from the waist upwards bent well round to the left, both arms thrown out in the same direction, and the left leg raised high in front. Marshall says, 'Although its contours are soft and effeminate, the figure is that of a male and it seems likely that it was ithyphallic, since the membrum virile was in a separate piece. I infer, too, from the abnormal thickness of the neck, that the dancer was three-headed or at any rate three-faced and I conjecture that he may represent youthful Śiva Naṭarāja. On the other hand, it is possible that the head was that of an animal.'[1] Whichever suggestion of Marshall be correct, it appears that this is one of the earliest cult-objects depicted in the attitude of dancing.

Another mode in which certain figures were depicted in the iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India is the flying one. It is usually adopted in the representation of the garland-bearing and flower-throwing attendants or accessories of the principal cult deity or his emblem. The early Buddhist monuments of Bharhut, Sanchi, Amaravati, etc., and the Jaina caves of Udayagiri and Khandagiri near Bhuvanesvar (Orissa) contain many such figures. They are usually divided into two main groups by the artists; the first are hybrid in appearance, their upper half being human with wings attached to the shoulders, their lower half being bird-like, while the second are entirely human even without the appendage of wings. According to iconographic terminology, the former are the Gandharvas, the latter being the Vidyādharas. The early Mathura artists make frequent use of these two types and their

[1] Marshall, *M.I.C.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

tendency to differentiate between them is clear.[1] Fig. 9 in Pl. IV is based on one of the Vidyādharas shown hovering in the sky with flower basket in his right hand, carved on the top part of the *prabhāvalī* of the Katra Buddha. There are no wings and the artist has in a very characteristic manner suggested the flying attitude. The garland-bearing cherubim and male and female flying figures were also frequently employed by the Hellenistic craftsmen of Gandhāra. The indigenous artists of the Gupta period made occasional use of flying couples of Vidyādharas, sometimes the male ones carrying swords in their hands (*cf. M.A.S.I.*, No. 25, Pl. XV, Fig. a); but the hybrid flying figures were not discontinued. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, ch. 42, vv. 9-10) describes this mode of representing the Vidyādhara couple in the following manner: *Rudrapramāṇāḥ kartavyāstathā vidyādharā nṛpa* l *Sapatnīkāśca te kāryā mālyālaṅkāradhāriṇaḥ*‖ *Khaḍgahastāśca te kāryā gagane vāthavā bhuvi.* The sculptors of the mediæval period introduce a new canon in using these motifs. They not only retain both the variants, *viz.*, the Vidyādharas and the Gandharvas, but allot well-marked position to both in their comprehensive scheme of decorating the stele (*prabhāvalī*). The hybrid couples, not being depicted now in the usual flying pose, are shown playing on musical instruments just above the *makara* motif on either side of the central figure, while the entirely human garland-bearing figures, sometimes singly and at other times with their consorts placed on their bent legs, are shown hovering on either side of the *kīrttimukha*. The *Mānasāra* (p. 370, vv. 7-9) describes the Vidyādharas and probably also their flying posture in this manner: *Puratah pṛṣṭhapādau ca lāṅgalākārāveva* ca l *Jānvāśritau* (*?jānvāśrayakṛtau*) *hastau gopuroddhṛtahastakau* ‖ *Evaṃ vidyādharāḥ proktāḥ sarvābharaṇabhūṣitāḥ.* The second of the above three lines, especially its last part, is difficult of interpretation (probably

[1] V. A. Smith, '*Jaina Stupa and other antiquities of Mathura*,' Pl. XVI, Fig. 1. Two flying figurines are depicted side by side, the one to the left with its mutilated face is purely human while the other is a mixed being. Smith says, however, about the former, 'The mutilated male figure to the left of the umbrella seems to be intended for a Gandharva.'

there is some mistake here in the text), but the meaning of the third line is quite clear. The first line most probably describes the flying pose in a very characteristic way; it means 'with ploughshare-like legs (shown) in front of the back. This appears to be a very significant mode of describing the flying posture which is depicted in the late Gupta and mediæval reliefs by the legs flexed backwards near the knees, the feet resembling the handle of the plough, and the knees, the metal ploughshare itself. The *Mānasāra* describes the Gandharvas, after the manner of their representation in mediæval art, as being not in the flying posture but either dancing or standing and playing on musical instruments; but their hybrid character is emphasised.[1] On rare occasions, more important divinities are also represented as flying in the sky. Thus, the top section of the relief showing the Anantaśayana Viṣṇu in the Deogarh temple, already referred to, shows divinities like Hara-Pārvatī, Indra and Kārttikeya flying in the air; they are seated on their respective mounts which, as their tensely strained legs and bodies show, are soaring through space.

Reference *in passim* may now be made to the conventional representation of the clouds in early and mediæval Indian art, in order to indicate the firmament through which the above figures fly. In the Kushan and early Gupta stone reliefs, the sky is hardly indicated on their background. On early Kushan coins, however, especially on some of the coins of Wema Kadphises and Huvishka, the imperial busts are shown as rising from the clouds. The clouds are suggested by uneven clots or dots clustering together below the bust; the Kushan kings claimed to be the sons of heaven, and could very appropriately use such as well as other devices like fire issuing from the shoulders, halo encircling their heads, etc., in their busts on the coins (*cf.* Gardner, *B.M.C.C.G.S.I.*, pp. 124-25, Pl. XXV, Figs. 6-9, Pl. XXVII, Figs. 8-11, 13, 14 etc.). On a

[1] *Mānasāra*, p. 370, vv. 9-10: *Nṛtyaṃ vā vaiṇavaṃ vāpi vaiśākhaṃ sthānākaṃ tu vā*‖ *Gīta-viṇā-vidhānaiśca gandharvāśceti kathyate* l *Caraṇaṃ paśusamānaṃ cordhvakāyaṃ tu narābham* ‖ *Vadanaṃ garuḍabhāvaṃ bāhukau ca pakṣayuktau.*

fragmentary stone relief in the Gandhāra room of the Indian Museum, probably depicting the Śyāma Jātaka, the *antarīkṣa* region is indicated not only by the round disc of the moon on its top section, but also by blotches of stone in an undulating roll suggestive of clouds (*cf.* N. G. Majumdar, *A Guide to the Gandhāra Sculptures in the Indian Museum*, Part II, p. 107). In the early and late mediæval art, however, a distinct layer of lozenge-shaped stone with wavy or undulating sides serves as the background of the garland-bearers on the top corners of the *prabhāvalī;* it is by this device that the artists wanted to indicate the sky full of wavy clouds.

The Hindus from the very early times were excessively fond of displaying ornaments in the images of their gods and goddesses. Most parts of the body—the head, the ears, the nose, the neck, the breasts, the upper and lower arms, the palms and fingers, the torso, the waist, the hip, the ankles, the feet—had their various appropriate ornaments. Grünwedel long ago observed this innate feature of the Indian iconographic art and remarked, ' The heroic form of Indian sculptured figures has been, and at all times remained, the same,—they are decked as for gala occasions. This form has been preserved with unalterable tenacity through the whole history of Indian art, and even in neighbouring countries' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 31). The principal cult images of Buddhism and Jainism were no doubt free from this peculiar feature; but the ornaments which could not be shown on their body were depicted with greater zeal on the images of most of the subordinate deities like the Bodhisattvas and the Śāsanadevatās. Of all the important types of the male Bodhisattvas, only one, *viz.*, Siṃhanāda Lokeśvara, is known to be without any ornaments (*nirbhūṣaṇa*); but the above peculiarity of this variety of Avalokiteśvara can only be explained on the basis of his ideological affinity with Śiva whose anthropomorphic form is usually least endowed with ornaments. Even the very images of Buddha himself of the mediæval period—especially in Eastern India, were sometimes endowed with jewelled crown

(*kirīṭa*) and an elaborately designed torque.[1] Even the images of divinities shown in the Yogic postures, such as the *yoga* varieties of Viṣṇu and the Yoga-Dakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva, are decorated with ornaments, though their number may not be as many as in the other types of images (in the case of some Śiva figures, these are shown as made of *rudrākṣa*, a kind of sacred seed).[2] The Indian practice of endowing even the *dhyāna-yoga* images of deities with ornaments goes back to the period of the Indus Valley culture; the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati on the seals is decorated with a number of bracelets, armlets, torques or a pectoral-like thing and a horned crown. This frequent and excessive display of ornaments on the images of their divinities by the Indians had an effect on the modelling of the human figure from the artistic point of view. Grünwedel has observed that 'the ornament, in the painfully careful execution it received, hindered very considerably the development of the human figure, since it always retained the conventional type for the forms ' (*op. cit.*, p. 31). It must be said, however, that, unlike the Greek artists, the Indians were not in the habit of emphasising the muscles on the body; thus, though the ornaments no doubt arrested the outline of the physical form being freely displayed, still the effect was not as harmful as could otherwise be feared. Therefore, the same scholar's remark that ' the shoulders loaded with broad chains, the arms and legs covered with metal ring, the bodies encircled with richly linked girdles, could never have attained an anatomically correct form ' should be accepted with some modification.

It will be necessary now to describe some typical ornaments which are commonly displayed on the different limbs of the divine image. There is no doubt that these were worn by the people themselves for whose religious use the

[1] N. G. Majumdar would recognise the Ādi-Buddha in them (*V. R. S.* : *Ann. Rep.*, 1926-7, Mus. Notes, pp. 7-10 & Figs. 4-6). But Coomaraswamy has disputed this suggestion and described them simply as the ' Crowned Buddha '; *J. R. A. S.*, 1928, p. 837.

[2] The two figures of Nara and Nārāyaṇa on one of the side niches of Deogarh temple are shown as two sages wearing no ornaments on their body ; *cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXXI. Rao wrongly describes them as Jñāna and Yoga Dakṣiṇāmūrtis of Śiva.

images were made. The various types of head-gear have been grouped by the author of the *Mānasāra* under the general term *mauli*, which, according to him, are subdivided into *jaṭā-makuṭa, kirīṭa-makuṭa, karaṇḍa-makuṭa, śirastraka, kuntala, keśabandha, dhammilla* and *alaka-cūḍaka*. It may be seen that in the above list the 2nd, 3rd and 4th denote different types of crowns, while the rest so many different modes of dressing the hair. The *jaṭāmakuṭa*, specially enjoined to be depicted on the heads of Brahmā, Rudra and Manonmānī, consists of matted locks of hair done up into the form of a tall crown on the centre of the head; it is sometimes adorned with jewels, a crescent and a skull, the two latter being used in the case of those worn by Rudra-Śiva. One of the names of Rudra-Śiva is Kaparddī which means ' one whose matted locks wave spirally upward like the top of a shell ' (some Buddha figures of the Śaka-Kushan period at Mathura have the *kapardda* type of *jaṭā-makuṭa* on their heads; *cf.* the Katra Buddha, sketched in Fig. 5, Pl. III). Several types of this variety of head-gear are reproduced by T. A. G. Rao in his book, Vol. I, Pls. VII and IX; those in the 2nd plate have been described by him as *jaṭābandha* or *jaṭābalaya* and *jaṭābhāra*.[1] *Kirīṭa-makuṭa*, specially appropriate for Nārāyaṇa, according to the *Mānasāra*, ' is a conical cap sometimes ending in an ornamental top carrying a central pointed knob ' (Rao). This type of head-gear was not worn, however, exclusively by the God Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu; it could also be worn by Sūrya and Kubera. Varāhamihira not only describes Viṣṇu as *kuṇḍalakirīṭadhārī* (wearing earrings and *kirīṭa* crown), but also says that Ravi should be wearing a *mukuṭa* (*mukuṭadhārī*) and Kubera should be *vāma-kirīṭī*, *i.e.*, the *kirīṭa* should be placed slantingly on the left side of his head.[2] Figure 8 in Plate IV shows the outline

[1] Rao quotes some extracts from *Uttarakāmikāgama*, describing the *uṣṇīṣa* in which the *jaṭāmakuṭa* is included; but, as he says, the description is somewhat unintelligible, Vol. I, pp. 27-28.

[2] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, vv.. 32, 47, 57; according to Utpala, *mukuṭa*, *mauli* and *kirīṭa* are used in the same sense. The extant images show that in most cases there is very little difference between the crown worn by Viṣṇu and that worn by Sūrya.

of a *kirīṭa-makuṭa*; the so-called basket-like head-dress worn by Śakra in the Hellenistic art of Gandhāra seems to be an early variant of the former (Pl. IV, Fig. 7). *Karaṇḍa-makuṭa* is shaped like a conical basket with the narrow end shown upwards. This is the type of crown peculiar to most of the other gods and the goddesses and is indicative of subordinate status according to Rao. *Śirastraka* (*śirastrāṇa*) is an elaborate turban which is so frequently shown on the heads of the Yakṣas, Nāgas, Vidyādharas and other male figures depicted in the early Indian art of the Śuṅga period. The figure of Śiva on the Sirkap seal seems also to wear this elaborate turban (Pl. X, Fig. 4); the type of head-gear shown on the head of composite deity on the Hephthalite seal (Pl. X, Fig. 2) is a very interesting one which cannot be named with precision. It may be described as *triśikha* mentioned in some texts as a type of head-dress ' with three peaks '. *Kuntala, keśabandha, dhammilla* and *alakacūḍaka* are, as has been said above, different modes of dressing the hair. These are appropriate to different goddesses, according to *Mānasāra*; thus, the first is shown on the head of Indirā (Lakṣmī), the first and second on those of Sarasvatī and Sāvitrī. The third and fourth are not mentioned in association with any goddess, but the former is recommended for the wives of such subordinate rulers like Māṇḍalikas and the latter ' for the women who carry torches before a king and the wives of the king's sword-bearers and shield-bearers.'[1] A mode of dressing the hair which was being used by the Eastern Indian artists in the representation of youthful Kṛṣṇa and other divinities from the late Gupta period onwards has been described by some archaeologists as *kākapakṣa* which is explained in the lexicons as ' *mastakapārśvadvaye keśaracanāviśeṣaḥ* ' *i.e.*, a type of arranging the hair on the two sides of the head (for illustration

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 26-30. The *Mānasāra* (P. K. Acarya's edition, p. 314) lays down that *kirīṭa* is to be worn by a Sārvabhauma, *i.e.*, the ruler ' whose rule extends to the shores of the four bounding oceans ' and by an Adhirāja, *i.e.*, one holding sway over seven provinces; *karaṇḍamakuṭa* is to be worn by a Narendra, *i.e.*, one ruling over three provinces, or sometimes even by a Cakravartin (evidently a ruler of a lesser dignity than a Sārvabhauma in this context).

of this mode on some figures of Kṛṣṇa at Paharpur, *cf.*, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 55, Pl. XXVIII). In the Hellenistic art of Gandhāra, different modes of dressing the hair are shown by the artists on the heads of Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya; the former has his hair tastefully arranged upwards with jewelled bands encircling it, while the latter has long hair tied sideways in a double knot just on the centre of the cranium. Spooner has referred to the later Buddhist texts in general which speak of different hair arrangements for different Bodhisattvas (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1906-07, p. 116). In some late Gandhāra and most of the Gupta and post-Gupta Buddha images, the hair is arranged schematically in separate short curls, each curl turning from left to right (*dakṣiṇāvartakeśa*, a *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*). The so-called cranial bump on the head of the Buddha images of early and late periods, wrongly described as *uṣṇīṣa*, the first of the 32 *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*, is, as has been shown by me elsewhere, nothing but the plastic form of hair done up in a top-knot in the centre of the head (*I.H.Q.*, 1931, pp. 499-514 & pls.). Moti Chandra has collected a lot of information about ' cosmetics and coiffure in ancient India ' and has illustrated his elaborate article with very useful drawings (*J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VIII, 1940, pp. 62-144).

The custom of perforating the ear-lobes and ears for the insertion of various types of ear ornaments is very old in India, and it is still current mainly among the women here though in a much restricted manner; but in ancient and mediaeval times it was common to both men and women. The ceremony of *karṇavedha* (perforation of the ear) is one of the important *sāṃskāras* in the life of a twice-born, and the wearing of *kuṇḍalas* was once regarded as one of the privileges of a *brahmacārin* (student initiate) and of a *gṛhastha* (householder). The physical peculiarity of long and distended ears and ear-lobes, which was the direct outcome of the wearing of heavy and broad ear-ornaments, came to be regarded as a sign of beauty and greatness (*cf. pṛthukarṇatā* as one of the signs of greatness in men). The long and distended ear-lobes of the figures of Buddha belonging to different periods and

localities in India also emphasise this peculiar custom. The *Agnipurāṇa* describes the image of Buddha named by it as Śāntātman (' he of the tranquil soul ') in this manner: *Śāntātmā lambakarṇaśca gaurāṅgaścāmbarāvṛtaḥ* ('Śāntātmā is long-eared, fair in complexion and clad in garments'). Different kinds of ear-rings (*kuṇḍalas*) are shown on the ears of different types of divinities. Rao refers to five kinds of ear-ornaments, *viz.*, *patra-kuṇḍala*, *nakra-kuṇḍala*, *śaṅkhapatra-kuṇḍala*, *ratna-kuṇḍala* and *sarpa-kuṇḍala*. Their very names indicate that they were made of cones of cocoanut- or palmyra-leaves or even thin gold leaves, (metal, ivory or wooden piece) in the shape of the mythical *makara* (a crocodile-like animal), cut sections of conch-shells, jewels, and (metal, ivory or wooden piece) fashioned like a cobra, respectively. Śiva and sometimes Gaṇapati are adorned with *sarpa-kuṇḍalas*, the *patra-* and *śaṅkhapatra-kuṇḍalas* are usually shown on the ears of the goddesses like Umā and others, while *nakra-kuṇḍala* and *ratna-kuṇḍala* can with equal appropriateness be used to decorate the ears of the divinities of both sex. Varāhamihira describes Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Baladeva as *kirīṭakuṇḍaladhārī*, *kuṇḍalabhūṣitavadana* and *bibhrat kuṇḍalamekam*, respectively. The ornament on the nose is known by the name of *vesara* (not a Sanskrit word) and is not to be found in early Indian images; in late figures of youthful Kṛṣṇa and goddesses like Rādhikā and her attendants, this ornament and its variants sometimes appear. Various kinds of ornaments were and are still used to decorate the neck, their names being *niṣka*, *hāra*, *graiveyaka*, etc. The earliest form of neck-ornaments is to be found in the representations of Śiva-Paśupati's prototype in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, and it seems that the pectoral-like object hanging from the neck and adorning the breasts is really nothing but a concentric row of neck-chains or torques. In the 33rd hymn of the *Ṛgveda*, Rudra is described as wearing a beautiful *niṣka*; in many other Vedic texts *niṣka* is mentioned. *Niṣka* in most of the passages signifies a neck-ornament (necklace, torque, etc.), and it was first suggested by E. Thomas on the authority of the Ṛgveda passage that the term there

meant a necklace made up of *niṣka* coins.[1] Hāra also means a torque or a necklace, and various types of it were current in ancient and mediaeval India, as the neck-ornaments of the extant images show. Sūrya is expressly described by Varāhamihira as *pralambahārī* (with a long torque hanging from his neck), and Hara (Śiva) is described in iconographic texts as ' loaded with the weight of *hāras* ' (*hārabhārārpito Haraḥ*). Another term which is used to denote a broad necklace in Sanskrit literature is *graiveyaka* which almost invariably adorns the neck and breasts of the Yakṣa and other figures in Central Indian art. In many cases these necklaces are adorned with jewel-pendants and the jewel *par excellence* adorning the breasts of Viṣṇu is *kaustubha* (Viṣṇu is described by Varāhamihira as *kaustubhamaṇibhūṣitoraska*).[2] The long necklace or garland hanging down from the neck below the knees, known as *vaijayantī* (also sometimes loosely called *vanamālā*) is peculiar to Viṣṇu; according to the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, it is five-formed for it is made up of five different gems, *viz.*, the emerald, pearl, blue stone (*nīlā*), ruby and diamond associated with the five elements. The *yajñopavīta* or the sacred thread which is invariably worn by the male members of the twice-born is found on the images of the gods from the Gupta period onwards; in the earlier images it is not usually to be found. In mediæval sculptures, what appears to be the representation of a jewelled *yajñopavīta* sometimes accompanies that of the cotton one; all this, of course, is

[1] E. Thomas, *Ancient Indian Weights*, p. 35. D. R. Bhandarkar in his *Carmichael Lectures* (1921) further pursued the idea and suggested that in some contexts *niṣka* meant a gold coin, while in others, a necklace made of coins (pp. 65-69); S. K. Chakravarti, however, suggests that the word always meant a necklace (*Studies in Ancient Indian Numismatics*, p. 23ff.).

[2] The breasts of Viṣṇu, Buddha and the Jinas are also characterised by the *śrīvatsa* mark. *Śrīvatsa* is a sort of hairy mole, one of the *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*; Utpala explains it as a '*romāvarta* '. Rao says, 'In sculpture this mole is represented by a flower of four petals arranged in the form of rhombus, or by a simple equilateral triangle, and is invariably placed on the right side of the chest.' In several mediæval Viṣṇu figures of the northern and eastern India, I could recognise this mark. In Chapter V of this book, I have referred to a symbol and its variants frequently to be found on the seals of the Gupta period as probably representing the *śrīvatsa* mark; *cf.*, Pl. II, Figs. 11 and 12.

placed in the *upavītī* fashion, *i.e.*, it encircles the torso from the top of the left shoulder and below the right arm. Sometimes the skin of an antelope (*kṛṣṇasāra*) is thrown over the body of such deities like Nara and Nārāyaṇa (*cf.* the Deogarh relief).

Channavīra, according to Rao, is ' a kind of flat ornament, a kind of jewelled disc, meant to be tied on the *makuṭa* or hung round the neck by a string so as to lie over the chest.' But Rao is not quite sure about his explanation; the ornament is mentioned very often in the iconographic texts. An ornament made of two chain-like objects worn crosswise on the torso, one in the *upavītī* and the other in the *prācīnāvītī* fashion (the latter is just the reverse of *upavītī*) with a flat disc placed on their junction near the centre of the chest, may illustrate *channavīra*; this is sometimes found on some late south-Indian sculptures of Viṣṇu or his incarnatory forms (*cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. LV, Figs. of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) and other images. Curiously enough, I have seen similar ornaments decorating the torso of a few figures in the Taxila museum. The Besnagar Yakṣiṇī seems to be adorned with this ornament (*cf.* also similar ornament on the figure of Culakokā devatā in a Bharhut pillar; many other such examples can be shown). Two other ornaments of the torso are the *kucabandha* and the *udarabandha*; their names signify the purpose for which they were used. Both of them are flat bands, the former to keep the breasts in position and the latter, the protruding belly. *Kucabandha* is only used in female figures and not even in all of them; Rao has observed that when a deity like Viṣṇu or Subrahmaṇya is depicted with two consorts, one on either side, the one on the right of the god is only adorned with this ornament or dress. His explanation that ' this peculiarity is perhaps connected with the right hand manner of worshipping the *devī* ' is not at all convincing. *Udarabandha* is shown in many male figures and it reminds us of the band going round the top of the protruding stomach of so many early representations of the Yakṣa figures (*cf.* the Parkham and other Yakṣa figures). The waist and hip of

both the male and the female figures are tastefully decorated with several kinds of jewelled ornaments like *kaṭibandha* (waistband), *mekhalā* (girdle), *kāñcīdāma* (a girdle furnished with small tinkling bells held in place by rows of chains), etc. Various types of such ornaments are met with in ancient, mediæval and modern Indian art; attention of the readers may be drawn to such ornaments on the Besnagar and the Didarganj Yakṣiṇī figures. In mediæval reliefs, both of the north and south, they are far more elaborate. Mention of *avyaṅga*, the waist-girdle peculiar to the Sun images of the north, should be made in this connection. It is based on the Avestan *aiwiyaonghana*, the sacred woollen thread gridle which a Zoroastrian is enjoined to wear round the waist. Round anklets in rows decorate the ankles mostly of the female figures from the early reliefs onwards, while the upper surface of the feet of the female figures and sometimes of the male figures also is decorated with an ornament elliptical in shape, known as *mañjīra*.

Many and various are the ornaments which are depicted as adorning the upper and lower arms of the deities. The earliest representation of such ornaments is to be found on the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati at Mohenjo-daro, and the many sculptures and terracotta figurines of the Maurya, Śuṅga and later periods portray various types of them. The names which are used in iconographic and other Sanskrit texts are such as *kaṅkaṇa*, *valaya*, *keyūra*, *aṅgada*, etc.; the first two are worn on the lower and the last two on the upper arm. '*Keyūra* is a flat ornament worn on the arm just over the biceps muscle, the *kaṅkaṇa* or the bracelet is worn at the wrist' (Rao). Sometimes the armlets were adorned with plaques containing interesting devices; one such is described by Vögel, worn by a seated Bodhisattva figure in the Mathura museum, as ' embellished with plaques on which we observe a human figure riding on a conventional bird, probably a Garuḍa or a peacock.'[1] The palms and fingers are sometimes

[1] *M.M.C.*, p. 58, Pl. X. The broad necklace displayed on the figure is also interesting; it is fastened with buckles in the shape of animal-heads. It is also adorned with a string of amulet-holders. commonly found on the Bodhisattvas of Gandhāra, worn in the *upavīti* fashion.

adorned with ornaments; small round discs are held in the inside centre of the palm with two chains crossing at its back, and the fingers are adorned with rings (*cf.* Fig. 87 in Pl. XXIII of Coomaraswamy's *H.I.I.A.*). Such an ornament to decorate the hand is now known in Bengal by the name of *ratanchūḍa*.

The early Indian artists attained a great deal of success in the treatment of the drapery which, in the case of male figures, is made up of a loin-cloth (*dhoti*) whose folds are very tastefully arranged in parallel rows in the early and mediæval period and a long scarf thrown loosely on the upper part of the body. In the early figures of the Maurya-Śuṅga period and even sometimes afterwards, the excess of the long loin-cloth is gathered together and shown hanging in a long tapering fold or folds in front. This form is common to both the male or female figures (*cf.* the figures of Parkham Yakṣa and Besnagar Yakṣiṇī, shown side by side in *H.I.I.A.*, Pl. III, Figs. 8 and 9). Thus there is not much difference in the dressing of male and female figures in early Indian art, especially in the lower part of the body. But the long scarf shown on the upper half of the male figures is usually absent in the female, the upper part of the latter remaining mostly uncovered. The torso of the male body is also shown bare (excepting the scarf mentioned above), the modern jacket-like garment (*āṅgiyā*, *āṅgrākhā*) being nowhere present. It is in the types of figures, undoubtedly representing people foreign to India, a few of which are met with in the early art of Sanchi and Bharhut, that we find the close covering of the whole of the body, from the neck to the feet.[1] This is one method of representing

[1] The figure on the Bharhut pillar with the inscription, *Bhadaṃtasa mahiḷasa thabho dānaṃ*, in the Indian Museum, as also the figures riding on winged lions in the eastern gateway at Sanchi are shown in this costume, *cf.* Barua, *Bharhut*, BK. III, Pl. LXII and Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 34, Fig. 10. It is curious that the heads of two of these figures are encircled by a band tied in a loop behind with its two loose ends floating downwards; this is very similar to the diadems worn by the Greek kings on their heads. The Bharhut pillar figure was tentatively described by me as an idealised representation of an Indo-Greek King (*cf. Proceedings of the Bombay Session of the Indian History Congress*, 1947, pp. 65 ff.).

the *udīcyaveśa* named by the authors of the iconographic texts while describing such figures as Sūrya, Citragupta and Dhanada (*cf.* Hemādri's *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, Bibliotheca Indica Edition, Vratakhaṇḍa, Vol. II, Pt. I, pp. 145-46); Varāhamihira characterises it fully as *gūḍhaṃ pādāduro yāvat* in his description of the Sūrya figures. In the extant images of Sūrya of an earlier date, the costume worn by the God is exactly similar to the dress worn by the Kushan kings like Wema Kadphises and Kanishka (*cf.* the sculptural and numismatic representations of these kings with the Sūrya relief at Bhumara). The mode of presentation of the costume changes in the later sculptures and varies mostly in details according to the different localities to which they belong. In the case of some late mediæval figures, great care is bestowed by the artist on the carving of the garment; thus, the *śārī*, *i.e.*, the cloth worn by women, which is shown round the body of the figure of Pārvatī, one of the Pārśvadevatās (deities shown on the side niches) of the Liṅgarāja temple at Bhuvanesvar, Orissa, is an example of the highest skill in carving. A few remarks about the dress shown on the body of the Buddha figures will not be out of place here; this is the dress of a Buddhist monk. It is made up of three pieces, *viz.*, the lower garment (*antaravāsaka*) which hangs down to the ankles and is gathered round the loins with a girdle; secondly, the upper garment (*uttarāsaṅga*) which covers the breast and shoulders and reaches below the knees ; and thirdly, the cloak (*saṅghāṭi*) worn over the two under-garments (*M.M.C.*, p. 35). Of these three pieces, the last is most prominently displayed in sculptures, though the artist does seldom fail to suggest one or other of the under-garments. Grünwedel and Vögel suggest that the treatment of the drapery was entirely derived from classical art. This is acceptable to a certain extent, though the motif represented, as Vögel himself suggests, is entirely Indian. But the remark of the latter scholar that ' the indication of the drapery is indeed foreign to Indian art ' (*ibid*, p. 35) does not bear scrutiny. In its support he has compared the presentation of the drapery on the Buddha images of Gandhāra and Mathura with the same

on those of the Gupta and the mediæval periods. But as I have just shown, the central Indian artists of the pre-Christian period indicate the garments worn in those days in diverse ways, and in many figures of the Gupta and mediæval period, dress is represented with great care. The diaphanousness of the drapery on the Buddha figures of Sarnath and afterwards is very effectively suggested by the artists, and it certainly does not testify to their inability in indicating the garments. This brings in the question of the representation of nudity in Indian art. The Greek sculptures, in the figures of the athletes and the mythological beings very often went in for the representation of the nude human body; in this they had the free scope to reveal the beauty of the physical form. But this in itself seems hardly to have been the aim and intention of the Indian artists; whenever rarely they represented the uncovered body, they were either actuated by a purpose of making the nudity repugnant to cultured taste or by mythological requirements. Thus, some of the Mathura Yakṣiṇīs who appear to be nude or just about to divest themselves of their garments (most of these Yakṣiṇīs are not depicted nude at all, but are presented by the artists as clothed in the most transparent of garments), or the nude female figures in the mediæval art of Orissa and central India emphasise the carnal character of nakedness. Mythology again necessitated the representation of nude body, where, however, the voluptuous element was entirely absent; we may refer, for instance, to the figure of a Jina or a Tīrthaṃkara of the Digamvara Jaina creed or of a Bhikṣāṭanamūrti of Śiva. Again, the idea which underlies the representation of the nude mother goddess found in India from the earliest times onwards is much the same as is evident in the so many realistic phalli, ring-stones of pre-historic India and Śiva-liṅgas of the historic period. But attempts to symbolise and sanctify the principles of virility and fecundity were not peculiar to India alone and many other nations of the world did the same thing in diverse ways.[1]

[1] *Cf.* Hartland's article on ' Phallicism ' in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics;* Wall, *Sex and Sex Worship*, etc.

Two other characteristic features of the Indian images in general, which require some notice here, are the *śiraścakra* and the *prabhāvalī*. The former represents the halo-circle round the head, corresponding to the Greek nimbus, while the latter stands for the larger halo round the whole of the divine body, really serving the purpose of the stele or the back-slab. Grünwedel remarks about the halo round the Buddha heads of Gandhāra that ' the nimbus is borrowed from the Greek school, yet it appeared very late in Greek art—in the time of Alexander ' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 86). But originally it belonged only to the astral divinities. Coomaraswamy has suggested, however, that ' the disc of gold placed behind the fire-altar to represent the Sun may well be the origin of the later *prabhāmaṇḍala* or *śiraścakra* (nimbus).' [1] In Gandhāra it is almost invariably plain; in the Śaka-Kushan art of Mathura it shows a scalloped border, while in the Gupta period though retaining this feature, it is endowed with more ornamentation. But several images of the Hindu divinities in the Gupta period are represented with comparatively plain nimbus. In the mediæval sculptures different types of *śiraścakra* are used to decorate the figures, the commonest of them taking the shape of a lotus flower in full blossom; another common variety is parabolic in shape, with two concentric layers of gable decorations at its outer end. Varāhamihira describes the image of Sūrya as having a *prabhāmaṇḍala* shining with jewels (*ratnojjvalaprabhāmaṇḍalaśca*). Rao says that the *śiraścakra* ' should have the form of a circle or a full-blown lotus, eleven *aṅgulas* in diameter, and should be away from the head by a distance equal to a third of its diameter. This halo-circle is attached to the back of the head of images by means of a rod whose thickness is equal to one-seventh of the diameter of the *śiraścakra*.' But the

[1] *H.I.I.A.*, p. 41. He supports his suggestion by saying ' Just as the tree behind the empty altar or throne, representing Buddha in the early art, remains in the later art when the throne is occupied, so the sun-disc behind the fire-altar may well have remained there when the deity was first made visible.' He remarks further, ' It is hard to believe that the nimbus can have originated outside the classic area of sun-worship. It may be of Iranian origin, or of Indian origin. *Ibid.*, p. 57, fn. 1.

description is more appropriate in the case of bronze images than in the case of wooden or stone ones. The mediæval bronze Viṣṇu images from Rungpur, first noticed by D. B. Spooner in the *Annual Report, Indian Archæological Survey*, for the year 1911-12 (pp. 152-58, Pls. LXX, LXXI), show separate *prabhāmaṇḍalas* attached to their heads. The stone or wooden images do not show this separate piece and the nimbus is carved on the back of their heads in the same piece. The *prabhāvalī* is an ornamental decoration, usually elliptical in shape, shown behind the whole body of the image; it is sometimes endowed with a number of *jvālās* or projecting tongues of flame This is really the background or the original slab on which the image is carved in very high relief. The usual relievo-character of the Indian sculptures and their necessary dependence on architectural art have been traced by Grünwedel to the ancient Indian style of carving in wood. The scholar's remarks about the Buddhist sculptures are very well appilcable to many images belonging to the other creeds. He says, ' even when figures are executed alone they are never represented without an aureole, never without attendant accessory figures, and never without a wall behind to form a solid background to the figure. This fact bears a certain relation to the Indian conception of the universe—the constant merging of historical persons in a system.....' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 30). Though, since this was written, several separate Yakṣa, Yakṣiṇī and similar figures of the Maurya-Śuṅga and Śaka-Kushan periods have been discovered in different parts of northern India, yet it is principally correct. Coomaraswamy, especially with an eye to these ' magnificent primitives ' observes the same thing with regard to Gupta art in this manner: ' In the Gupta period the image has taken its place in architecture; becoming necessary, it loses its importance, and enters into the general decorative scheme and in this integration acquires delicacy and repose ' (*H.I.I.A.*, p. 71). Occasionally, however, the image is partially carved out of the back-slab, portions behind the torso, the head and the legs being fully chiselled out, giving

it the specious appearance of being fully in the round; but it is attached to its background in the extreme ends, thus retaining its relievo-character all the same. The *prabhāvalī* sometimes contains the emblems special to the god to whose image it serves as the background; while, in the case of some principal types of Viṣṇu images (*dhruva-beras*) the ten *avatāras* are carved on it. In early and late mediæval Hindu images of northern and eastern India, it commonly depicts a scheme of decorative carving on it; thus, in a fully complete stele, the order of arrangement of the motifs from the pedestal (*pīṭhikā*) upwards is first the leogryph (lion upon elephant—*gaja-śārdūla*, sometimes the animals bear sword-bearers on their backs), then the *makara* transom, above it the hybrid couple (Gandharvas) playing on lute and dancing, a little higher up the flying garland-bearers (*mālādhārī* Vidyādharas) among the clouds and lastly the *kīrttimukha* finial. This last motif consists of a grinning lion face with protruding goggle eyes and fangs, just placed in the top centre of the *prabhāvalī*, sometimes chains of jewel garland issuing out of either corners of its mouth. The *kāla-makara* motif in Indonesian art seems to be an adaptation of this Indian motif. The age of an image belonging to the eastern India can be satisfactorily determined with the help of its *prabhāvalī*. In the earlier period it is usually plain, decorated with the scallop or cable design at its outer rim and the top is fully rounded (very rarely, the whole of it appears in the shape of a rough oblong); the *kīrttimukha*, *leogryph*, etc., are usually absent. Gradually, it becomes torus-shaped with the pointed peak in the top centre, and the various motifs named above crowd in. In the reliefs of the Sena period, some varieties are also characterised by profuse ornamental carvings, reminding one of the Hoysala school of Mysore.[1]

The *pīṭha* or *pīṭhikā*, about which something has already been said by me in connection with *āsanas*, is that portion of

[1] This was first observed by Stella Kramrisch in her article on 'Pāla and Sena Sculptures' in *Rupam*, No. 40. She has also suggested that ' The grinning face ' really stands for Rāhu in her *Hindu Temple*.

the stone slab on which the image is shown. In its top layer, it is usually of the form of a *mahāmbuja* or *viśva-padma*, *i.e.*, a double-petalled lotus, one set of petals pointing upwards and the lower set gracefully drooping down: the feet of the god or goddess rest on the pericarp (*karṇikā*) of the flower. The real pedestal below usually of two or more distinct layers is of the *pañcaratha* or *saptaratha* type, *triratha* and *navaratha* varieties being uncommon; the *rathas* indicate the re-entrants or facets and their number is never even. On these different horizontal sections of the pedestal are carved the figures of the donors of the image (usually the donor couple are depicted, thus laying stress on the association of the wife, *i.e.*, *sahadharmiṇī*, with her husband in the pious act), the particular mount of the god or goddess; sometimes, though rarely, objects used in the ritual worship (*i.e.*, the *pūjopakaraṇas*) such as a lamp (*dīpa*), a bell (*ghaṇṭā*), offering (*naivedya*), etc., are also figured there. In the pedestals of the early mediæval period and even a little later, the decorations in the shape of lotus blossoms with stalks and leaves are far simpler and are usually carved in outline; but in those of the later mediæval period (late Pāla and Sena) these are more ornate and the lotus blossoms are embossed. The above observations show that the image with its accessories, with both the *prabhāvalī* and the *pīṭha* are carved out of the same slab of stone, thus all embodying an organic whole. Such other *pīṭhas* as the *bhadrapīṭha*, a brief description of which has already been given, are usually made of separate pieces of stone; these are normally broad in their top and bottom sections, the middle ones being narrow. Coomaraswamy makes this interesting remark about the shape of such *pīṭhas*, " The altar (used in Vedic sacrifice) itself, usually wide above and below and narrow in the middle ' like a woman's waist,' is evidently the prototype of the *āsana* and *pīṭha* of later images " (*H.I.I.A.*, p. 41).

I have reserved the consideration of the various kinds of objects placed in the hands of the Hindu images to the last part of this chapter. These objects can be classed under

several heads like weapons, implements, musical instruments, animals and birds, etc., which are the respective attributes or emblems of the different members of the Hindu pantheon. The weapons that are usually mentioned in iconographic texts are *cakra, gadā, daṇḍa, kheṭaka, dhanus, śara, aṅkuśa, pāśa, khaḍga, paraśu, śūla, śakti, vajra, agni, muṣala* and *khaṭvāṅga*, etc. Rao not only mentions the above as so many important weapons, but adds to the above list three other objects such as *śaṅkha, ṭaṅka* and *hala* which can also justifiably be described as such. *Śaṅkha* is an ordinary conchshell which was blown in ancient times by the warriors in the battle field for the purpose of inspiring their own soldiers with hope and striking terror into the minds of their opponents. In the first canto of the *Bhagavadgītā*, Sañjaya recounts the names of various *śaṅkhas* used by the principal warriors assembled in the field of Kurukṣetra, the special *śaṅkha* of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu being described as *pāñcajanya* (said to have been made out of a bone of the demon Pañcajana, killed by the god). *Ṭaṅka*, a stone-mason's chisel, and *hala*, a plough-share, really fall under the category of implements, but could also be used as offensive weapons in early times. *Sīra* is another name of the ploughshare; it is the particular emblem of Saṃkarṣaṇa-Baladeva, as *taṅka* is of Śiva. *Cakra* is a wheel, the one *par excellence* held by Viṣṇu being *Sudarśana* and the Pāñcarātra texts like the *Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā* elaborately describe the latter. In art it is represented in two ways, either as a cart wheel (*cf.* Pl. X, Fig. 2; Pl. VIII, Fig. 2) or as an ornamental disc., sometimes in the form of a full-blown lotus, the petals serving as the spokes. *Gadā* or the Indian club or mace is usually represented as thicker than the *daṇḍa* or the ordinary cudgel. In the very early representations of this weapon found in some Indian coins and seals, no distinction is probably made between these two weapons, one form of which seeming to have some similarity to the knotted club of Herakles (*cf.* Pl. I, Figs. 12 and 18; Pl. X, Fig. 2; Pl. VIII, Fig. 18 and Pl. X, Fig. 4; in the hands of the deity shown in Pl. I, Figs, 4, 7, 8 and 13 in Pl. VIII, Fig. 16, the object is shown

simply as a short slender cudgel). The mace held in the hands of Viṣṇu is known as *kaumodakī* or *kaumodī*. *Śaṅkha, cakra* and *gadā* are collectively the attributes particular to Viṣṇu, though individually the last two are sometimes placed in the hands of other divinities. *Kheṭaka* is a shield either round or oblong in shape; it is primarily a weapon of defence and used to be made of wood, metal or skin (on account of its being also made of hide, it is very often named *carma* in iconographic texts). *Dhanus* and *śara* are a bow and an arrow, and special names are given to the bows held by different gods; thus, the bows of Śiva and Viṣṇu are called *pināka* and *śārṅga* respectively. The bow held by Pradyumna (Manmatha, Kāmadeva—the same as Māra in the Buddhist mythology) is floral (he is also called Puṣpadhanvā) and having arrows five in number (*pañcaśara*). Manmatha, the God of love, is sometimes (especially in the mediæval period), endowed with a sugar-cane bow. *Aṅkuśa* is an elephant goad and *pāśa*, a noose or lasso used in binding one's enemies; the latter is sometimes shown in the form of a snake (*nāgapāśa*). *Khaḍga* means a sword and various names are used to denote swords particular to different deities; the sword of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu is *nandaka*, while the one placed in the hand of the consort of Pradyumna is *nistriṃśa*. The special weapons of the consorts of Śāmba and Pradyumna, both sons of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, are a *kheṭaka* and *nistriṃśa* respectively, their own weapons being a mace and a bow (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 40—*Śāmbaśca gadāhastaḥ Pradyumnaścāpabhṛt surūpaśca | Anayoḥ striyau ca kārye kheṭakanistriṃśa-dhāriṇyau*). *Paraśu* and *śūla*, the weapons *par excellence* of Śiva, are a battle-axe and a trident, and in their early representations are often combined (*cf.* Pl. I, Figs. 16, 19, 21 and Pl. VIII, Fig. 10; for *śūla* shown separately, see Pl. I, Fig. 15; Pl. VIII, Figs. 16-18 and Pl. X, Fig. 4). *Śakti* is a spear, the special weapon of Skanda-Kārttikeya and Durgā, while *vajra*, a thunder-bolt, is particular to Indra and Śiva. *Vajra* seems to have been represented in early art in two different ways; one is clublike in appearance,

narrow in the middle and wider at both ends (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Fig. 15, in the upper right hand of Śiva on a coin of Huvishka) and the other is a double-faced weapon ending in projecting prongs at its both hands (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Fig. 16, upper right hand; Pl. IX, Fig. 3—a *vajra* of this variety, shown behind its personified form on whose head the right hand of Zeus-Indra is placed). *Agni* shown as a ball of fire is placed in one of the hands of Śiva-Naṭarāja; it may also be depicted as a torch serving the purpose of an incendiary weapon. The earliest representation of *agni* as the sacrificial fire (a pot with flames issuing out of it) is found in the scene of the miracle of sacrifice (performed by Buddha for the conversion of Kāśyapa) carved in the eastern gateway of Sanchi (in mediæval Indian art, it is shown in the illustration of the marriage of Śiva-Pārvatī, the Kalyāṇasundaramūrti of Śiva). *Muṣala* is the wooden pestle, ' an ordinary cylindrical rod of wood capable of being used as an offensive weapon '; it is usually placed in one of the hands of Saṃkarṣaṇa-Balarāma. *Khaṭvāṅga* is ' a curious sort of club, made up of the bone of the forearm or the leg, to the end of which a human skull is attached through its foramen ' (Rao). This description shows how hideous the weapon was, though in some of its late mediæval representations, this character is somewhat subdued by the replacement of the osseous shaft by a well-carved and ornamented wooden handle; this weapon is peculiar to the awe-inspiring forms of the Devī and her consort Śiva, such as Cāmuṇḍā and Bhairava.

I have already referred to the few implements which can be improvised as weapons. Other implements are comparatively rare in iconographic art, but in some of the images of the Āḻvārs and the Nāyanmārs (the South IndianViṣṇu-bhaktas and Śiva-bhaktas, many of whom were historical persons) a few such implements are sometimes shown. *Sruk* and *Sruva* are sacrificial ladles, the usual emblems of Brahmā, the former for taking out the clarified butter from the butter-pot (*ājyapātra* or *ājyasthālī*) and the latter for pouring it into the sacrificial fire. The same ladle was not used, as the

sruk if it came in contact with the fire would be *ucchiṣṭa*, and it would be improper to put it again into the butter-pot. Various kinds of musical instruments are represented in early and late iconographic art, and such names as *vīṇā*, *veṇu* or *murali*, *ḍamaru*, *śaṅkha*, *ghaṇṭā*, *mṛdanga*, *karatāla*, etc., are well known. *Vīṇā* in the Śuṅga art of Central India is shown as a stringed instrument like the Greek harp or lyre; the harp-like *vīṇā* appears for the first time in a Bharhut rail pillar, it being placed in the hand of a devatā, probably the prototype of Sarasvatī, the goddess of fine arts and learning (*cf.* Pl. XVII, Fig. 2). Samudragupta is shown playing on such a musical instrument in his Lyrist type coins of gold. Another mode of depicting it is the long stringed instrument somewhat similar to modern *esrāj*, shown in the hands of the mediæval and modern figures of Sarasvatī and Vīṇādharadakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva. *Veṇu* or *muralī* is the bamboo flute usually placed in the hands of some youthful figures of Kṛṣṇa of a comparatively late period. *Ḍamaru* or a small kettle drum played by the hand is one of the characteristic emblems of Śiva; this was wrongly recognised in the upper right hand of Śiva on some coins of Huvishka (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Figs. 13 and 15) by Gardner. *Śaṅkha* also falls under the category of a musical instrument, while *ghaṇṭā* is a plain bell usually placed in one of the hands of the multi-armed image of Pārvatī. *Mṛdaṅga*, a big drum wide in the middle and narrow at the ends, is sometimes shown as being played by the divine attendants. *Karatālas* are a pair of metal cymbals struck against each other with both hands to keep time with the music; these are also rarely shown and are usually placed in the hands of the accessories.

Various other objects which can be recognised in the hands of divinities include *kamaṇḍalu*, *akṣamālā*, *darpaṇa*, *kapāla*, *pustaka*, *padma*, etc. *Kamaṇḍalu* is a water-pot, the special emblem of various deities like Śiva, Brahmā, Pārvatī and others and is depicted in various ways (for some early forms of this, see Pl. I, Figs. 4, 7, 8, 13; Pl. VIII, Figs. 13, 15, 16). *Akṣamālā*, or *akṣasūtra*, sometimes simply called *sūtra*, a rosary of beads of either *rudrākṣa* or

kamalākṣa variety 'is found in the hands of Brahmā, Sarasvatī and Śiva, though rarely in association with other deities' (Rao). *Darpaṇa* is a mirror made of highly polished metal as in vogue in ancient times and is one of the attributes of certain aspects of the Devī. *Pustaka*, the special emblem of Brahmā and Sarasvatī, is usually represented in art as a manuscript made of palm leaves. *Padma*, a lotus flower, an emblem common to many gods and goddesses, is usually depicted in several varieties, such as a lotus-bud, a full-blown flower round in shape, or a blue lotus (*nīlotpala*) longish in appearance; Rao has shown that in the south Indian Bhogasthānakamūrtis of Viṣṇu, goddess Śrī who stands to the right of the god always holds a full-blown lotus in her hand while Bhūdevī who is on his left, a *nīlotpala*. The same writer has also observed that the South Indian images of Sūrya almost invariably hold two lotus-buds by their stalks in their hands while the North Indian ones, two full-blossomed lotus flowers. *Kapāla*, the most characteristic emblem of some of the fearful aspects of Śiva and Pārvatī, is a cup made out of a human skull, to drink wine from which is one of the various rites of a Tāntric *sādhaka*. The Chinese annals inform us that the victorious leader of the Hiung-nu tribe drank out of such a cup made out of the skull of the Wu-sun chief who was defeated and killed by him. Śiva had the skull of Brahmā attached to his hand, of which he could only get himself rid after severe penances for the sin of Brahmanicide (*cf.* his Bhairavamūrti which is the same as Brahmaśiraśchedakamūrti). Animals and birds are rarely placed in the hands of the images of deities, a goat or ram and deer, and a cock being the few known to me. The Śiva figure carved on the Guḍimallam Liṅga carries either a goat or a ram, and in some of the representations of the same god on some coins of Kanishka and Huvishka an antelope is to be found (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Figs. 13, 15 and 17). The cock which along with peacock serves as the crest of Skanda-Kārttikeya, is sometimes, though rarely, placed in the hand of the god.

One or two words about the ideology underlying this custom of placing the diverse objects in the hands of their divinities by the Hindu worshippers will not be out of place here. I have already drawn the attention of my readers in a previous chapter to the views of Macdonell, Rao and Hocart about the multiplicity of arms of the Hindu divinities, which feature was regarded by some writers like V. A. Smith as a monstrosity of the Indian iconographic art. The views of Rao and after him Hocart are far more acceptable than that of Macdonell. Coomaraswamy has fully shown in his article on 'Buddhist Primitives' in his *Dance of Śiva*, how Smith's charge is absolutely untenable. The idea of symbolising the manifold activities of the deity, in however imperfect a manner, undoubtedly lies at the root of placing in these multiple hands the variety of objects noted above. In the developed concepts about the numerous members of the Hindu pantheon, particular activities were associated with the individual units among them. It is no wonder then that one or more of these objects came to be regarded as special to different gods, though it must not be forgotten that the same objects could also appear in the hands of other deities in a secondary role. The mythology at the root of the varieties of divinities also determined the allocation of the objects. Thus, Brahmā, one of the members of the Hindu Triad in the post-Vedic age, was undoubtedly derived from Prajāpati, the Vedic god of sacrifice; so, the *sruk*, *sruva* and *pustaka* (really the Vedas in manuscript form) became his special emblems. Viṣṇu, really a composition of Viṣṇu (a Vedic Āditya), Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa, and one of the two prominent members in the Triad (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva), has, in his *cakra* and his mount Garuḍa, his Vedic trait of an aspect of the Sun-god fully emphasised, for the former is the sun in the shape of a wheel and the latter the same deity in his theriomorphic form. But the *cakra* was also conceived as a weapon of war along with his other emblem *gadā*, in order to emphasise his character as the chastiser of the wicked. Śiva, the last of the Triad, an amalgam of the awe-inspiring Rudra of the Vedic texts, the

pre-Vedic god of the Indus valley and several other god concepts, could very appropriately be endowed with a cudgel, a trident and a thunderbolt, the weapons with which he destroys the world. But as side by side with this destructive aspect, his benignity and omniscience are also characteristic of him according to the epic and purāṇic literature, emblems indicative of these traits are not wanting in his mediæval representations. Saṃkarṣaṇa (Balarāma), the elder brother of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa and one of the Vyūhas in the Pāñcarātra system, had certainly in his composition the traits of a harvest or bucolic deity. This idea seems to be at the root of his characteristic emblems, *viz.*, a plough-share (*hala*), sometimes a pestle used in pounding corn (*muṣala*) and the drinking vessel (*pānapātra*) emphasising his inebriety (Varāhamihira describes him as *Baladevo halapāṇirmadavibhramalocanaśca karttavyaḥ | Vibhratkuṇḍalamekaṃ śaṅkhendumṛṇālagauratanuḥ*, *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, V. 36).

CHAPTER VIII

Canons of Iconometry

It has already been briefly mentioned in the fifth chapter that the Indian sculptors used to follow certain rules of proportions in the making of images. I have criticised the view that the stereotyping of these rules and their adoption by the artists lay at the root of the gradual decadence of Indian iconoplastic art. These canons were really the results of the accumulated experience of generations of artists; if they were judiciously followed, they would not have been injurious to art. T. A. G. Rao, who was responsible for the above view criticised by me, himself observes, '. . . . the rules arrived at by the Indian artists do not appear to be divergent from those evolved by the European artists, and *if in Indian sculpture the results are not good in some instances it is the fault of the artists and not attributable to the guide books*' (*Elements*, etc., Vol. I, App. B, p. 8; *italics are mine*). In some of the compilations containing these rules, it is expressly laid down that the divine images must not only be well-proportioned but must also be good-looking; the image-maker should visualise in his mind's eye the god to be represented in concrete and then should fashion him according to his mental perception, for these images are really the aids to the attainment of *dhyānayoga* (*Dhyānayogasya saṃsiddhyai pratimālakṣaṇaṃ smṛtam | Pratimākārako marttyo yathādhyānarato bhavet*—*Śukranītisāra*, IV, 147). But as very few sculptors could be successful in turning out really beautiful images (*Sarvāṅgaiḥ sarvaramyo hi kaścillakṣe prajāyate*), it would be better that all divine images conform to the correct proportions as laid down in the *śāstras*, for ' beautiful is that image which is made according to the canons detailed in the *śāstras*,—no other is so ' (*Śāstramānena yo ramyaḥ sa ramyo nānya eva*

hi). The practice of stereotyping these rules of proportions in the fashioning of human figures was not peculiar to the Indian artists alone, but was also adopted by many ancient nations of the world. W. W. Hyde says, ' The doctrine of human proportions is very ancient, originating in Egyptian art.' [1] The first canon employed by the Egyptians in the time of the Ancient Empire, ' divides an erect human figure over 18 squares, the highest of which ends, not at the top of the head, but at the top of the brow, thus leaving the dome of the skull outside, as well as the head-dresses or crowns which the Egyptian monuments display in such great variety.' [2] Hyde remarks very properly that the greatest artists—architects, painters and sculptors of all times have taught and practised the doctrine that certain proportions are beautiful, *e.g.*, the proportion of the height of the head or the length of the foot to the whole body.[3] In modern times, we have only to mention such names as those of da Vinci, Duerer, Raphael and Flaxman. In Greek days there were many artists who formulated such canons of proportions. I have already stated that there were different schools of sculptors in ancient Hellas such as Old Attic, Old Argive, Polyclitan, Argive, Sicyonian or Lysippan, etc., which were distinguished from one another on the basis of the fixed proportions of the parts of the human figure. These proportions were written down by subsequent artists and art-historians for the help and guidance of later sculptors and painters. E. A. Gardner tells us that '*theoretical* works upon the principles of sculpture were written by several of the most distinguished artists of antiquity; but none of these have been preserved to us. . . . . Later compilers have recorded many opinions or statements, often without acknowledgement which we can trace with more or

[1] *Olympic Victor Monuments and Greek Athletic Art*, p. 67.

[2] Jean Capart, *Egyptian Art*, p. 156.

[3] W. W. Hyde, *op. cit.*, p. 68. I shall presently show that in ancient and mediæval India, the length of the face (from the chin to the beginning of the hair-line—*keśarekhā*) or the inside length of the outstretched palm was the bigger unit known as *tāla* in terms of which the whole height of the body was calculated.

less certainty to these lost treatises.'[1] Polyclitus, who flourished in the 5th century B.C. and was most probably a pupil of Ageladas of Argos, was one of the first to write such a work dealing with the proportions of the body; he embodied these rules in a sculpture named as the 'Doryphorus' (the treatise as well as the sculpture was described in the Greek works on art as the *Canon*). Euphranor, the Corinthian, who flourished in the fourth century B.C. and who was both a sculptor and a painter, also wrote upon colouring and proportion; his study of proportion seems to indicate at once an imitation of Polyclitus and a departure from his Canon.[2] In the Hellenistic age such treatises became quite common, and this fact was not a little due to the influence of the great artist of this age, Lysippus, one of the most prolific sculptors of ancient Hellas. He was looked upon by the later Hellenistic artists and art-critics as the most academic of sculptors; he revolutionised the system of proportions adopted by his predecessors such as Polyclitus and others and introduced many technical innovations and improvements which he derived from a direct and thorough study of nature. The activities of the two artists of the Pergamene school, *viz.*, Antigonus and Xenocrates (3rd-2nd century B.C.), who were both writers on art and practical sculptors, can be directly traced to the school of Lysippas. They ' are cited by Pliny as authorities; and very probably their works commonly served as a basis for the treatises of the later writers ' (E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 2). Most of the artists mentioned above not only made figures of mere mortal men such as the Greek athletes, where they could display their keen sense of modelling the human body, but also fashioned divine images, such as those of Zeus, Hera, Nike, Aphrodite and a host of other Greek deities. It is needless to state that in the latter class of

[1] E. A. Gardner, *A Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 2. One can compare with the above statement my remarks in the first chapter about the indebtedness of various Indian writers on iconography and iconometry to their predecessors.

[2] E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 404. ' He evidently adopted unusually slender forms, in a reaction against the solid and heavy building of the Polyclitan athlete.'

sculptures also, the artists followed certain canons of proportions, according to the tradition of their respective schools. I have stated in the first chapter of this book that secular images used also to be made in ancient and mediæval India. A. N. Tagore thinks that the canons of proportions which are incorporated in ancient and mediæval Indian *Śilpaśāstras* were only applicable in the case of images intended for worship and the artist was ' free in all other cases, to follow his own art instinct.'[1] Such might or might not have been the case; but it is more probable that in their secular images also, the Indian artists, like the Greek and Egyptian ones, followed some recognised rules of proportions.

In India, as well as in other ancient countries of the world, the deities were mostly conceived anthropomorphically and represented as mortals in mythology and art. The affinity between the mortals and the immortals lay not merely in this anthropomorphism, but it also lay deeper. When Euhemerus explained the members of the Greek pantheon as ordinary men who had lived and acted in this world in bygone days, he was really giving expression to the very common tendency of the human mind to endow the deities with human emotions and passions. I have drawn the attention of my readers in the second chapter of this book to the Ṛgvedic description of the deities as *divo naras*, *nṛpeśas* (' men of the sky,' ' kings of men '), etc; innumerable again, are the myths narrated in the Vedic, Epic and Purāṇic literature where the denizens of the heavens appear like mere men, living their lives of joys and sorrows. In later times in India, from the iconographic and iconometric points of view, this likeness is always present. Leaving aside the theriomorphic or therio-anthropomorphic divinities, even those gods or goddesses endowed with more limbs than are natural, really present cases of exaggerated anthropomorphism. In the proportional heights assigned to different types of

[1] A. N. Tagore, *Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*, p. 3. He explains the line ' *Sevya-sevaka-bhāveṣu pratimālakṣaṇaṃ smṛtam*.' thus, ' Images should conform to prescribed types when they are to be contemplated in the spirit of worship.'

divine images in early iconometric texts, we recognise the heights attained by several types of men in India. The Indians from a fairly early period believed in the existence of five different types of men (*pañcamanuṣyavibhāga*), which might or might not have ethnic bases. These five classes, according to Varāhamihira, are *Haṃsa*, *Śaśa*, *Rucaka*, *Bhadra* and *Mālavya*, who are born when the planets Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Mercury and Venus are ascendant respectively.[1] The height as well as the girth of the *Haṃsa* type of men is laid down by the same author as 96 *aṅgulas*, the height and girth of the four other classes exceeding by three *aṅgulas* each from the same of its immediate predecessor (*i.e.*, a *Śaśa* type of man will be 99 *aṅ.*, a *Rucaka*—102 *aṅ.*, a *Bhadra*—105 *aṅ.* and a *Mālavya*—108 *aṅ.*).[2]

Now, images of different gods and goddesses conformed to the two of the various proportional heights mentioned above, *viz.*, the first and the last. The *aṣṭatāla* images,—figures of goddesses usually were made according to this height (*cf.* V. 88 in the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam*, edited by P. Bose, which reads: *Dīrghaṃ cāṣṭamukhaṃ kuryād devīnāṃ lakṣaṇaṃ budhaiḥ*), though there were also several gods who were shown up to this stature,—were those which were 96 *aṅgulas*. just as high as a *Haṃsa* type, according to

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 68, vv. 1-2 :—
Tārāgrahairbalayutaiḥ svakṣetrasvoccagaiścatuṣṭayagaiḥ ।
Pañcapuruṣāḥ praśastā jāyante tānahaṃ vakṣye ॥
Jīvena bhavati haṃsaḥ saureṇa śaśaḥ kujena rucakaśca ।
Bhadro budhena balinā mālavyo daityapūjyena ॥

[2] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 68, v. 7 : *Saṇṇavatiraṅgulānāṃ vyāyāmo dīrghatā ca haṃsasya* । *Śaśarucakabhadramālavyasaṃjñitastryaṅgulavivṛddhyā*. An explanation is necessary about the height and girth being the same of each of the different classes of men. They are really *nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* types, in which the height of the figure is equal to the measurement from the middle finger-tip of one hand to the same of the other, both arms being fully extended each way in the same line with the chest. *Vyāyāma* or *pṛthutā* has been explained by Utpala as ' *prasāritabhujadvayasya pramāṇam*.' This is one of the most important characteristic signs of the Mahāpuruṣas (*Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*) and Utpala quotes the following couplet from Parāśara to elucidate it further :—*Ucchrāyaḥ pariṇāhastu yasya tulyaṃ śarīriṇaḥ* । *Sa naraḥ pārthivo jñeyo nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalaḥ*. For further observations on this term, the reader is referred to my *Pratimālakṣaṇam* (Cal. Univ. Press), pp. 21-24, 77-79.

Varāhamihira; as I shall presently show, it was also the height of a *samaparimāṇa* or *madhyama* class of image. The height of the *Mālavya* variety of men, *viz.*, 108 *aṅ.*, on the other hand, exactly corresponded to the *navatāla* images, which were grouped by the same author among the *pravara* or the best class of images.[1] It should be noted that from the descriptions given of the five different kinds of men, the *Mālavya* seems to be the best and the heights of the *Mālavya* and *Haṃsa* varieties of men alone are uniform.[2] The *Matsyapurāṇa* evidently refers to the *Mālavya* type, when it says that the man who measures 9 *tālas* from the top of the head to the bottom of the feet and whose arms reach the knees are greatly respected by the gods (ch. 145, v. 10: *Āpādatalamastako navatālo bhavet tu yaḥ* | *Saṃhatājānubāhuśca daivatairabhipūjyate*). The physical features of the former, which are enumerated by Varāhamihira, contain several of the major *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*, which are also the characteristic signs of a Buddha or a god. The verse reads: *Mālavyo nāganāsaḥ samabhujayugalo jānusamprāptahasto māṃsaiḥ pūrṇāṅgasandhiḥ samaruciratanurmadhyabhāge kṛśaśca* | *Pañcāṣṭau cordhvamāsyaṃ śrutivivaramapi tryaṅgulonaṃ ca tiryagdīptākṣaṃ satkapolaṃ samasitadaśanaṃ nātimāṃsādharoṣṭham*. One among these features, *viz.*, 'the full fleshy limbs and joints of the body,' typically emphasises one of the particular traits of the ideal divine figure in Indian art.[3]

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 3c.

[2] *Bhadra* type, as we have seen, measures 105 *aṅ.*; but in ve 18 of the chapter on *Pañcamanuṣyavibhāga* (ch. 68), Varāhamihira tells us that such men are 84 *aṅ.* high (*Aṅguḷāni navatiśca ṣaḍūnānyucchrayeṇa*); Utpala reconciles this discrepancy by commenting that when such a type of man attains to the height of 105 *aṅ.*, he becomes a *sārvabhauma* monarch (*Yadi pañcottaramaṅgulaśataṃ vyāyāmena dairghyeṇa ca bhavati tadā sakalāvaninātha sārvabhaumo rājā bhavatītyarthaḥ*). But in the case of two other types, *viz.*, *Śaśa* and *Rucaka*, the commentator does not care to make any remark about this discrepancy; in verses 21 and 29 of the same chapter in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the respective heights of the two are given as 92 and 100 *aṅgulas*.

[3] This is *māṃsaiḥ pūrṇāṅgasandhiḥ* which has been commented on by Utpala as *māṃsaiḥ paripūrṇāḥ sarvāṅgasandhayo yasya* | *Anulvaṇāsthirityarthaḥ*. The *Śukranītisāra* lays down that those images in which the joints, bones, veins and arteries are hidden, are always auspicious (IV, 4,146—*Gūḍhasandhyasthidhamanī sarvadā saukhyavarddhinī*).

In order to understand the canons of iconometry clearly, it is necessary to know something about the meaning and usage of certain technical terms denoting the different ways in which an image can be measured. The *Vaikhānasāgama* mentions six such ways of measurement (*mānas*), *viz.*, *māna*, *pramāṇa*, *unmāna*, *parimāṇa*, *upamāna* and *lambamāna*.[1] It also gives various synonyms of each of these terms, incidentally explaining the significance of each. Rao, on the basis of this text, writes, '*Māna* is the measurement of the length of a body; *pramāṇa* is that of its breadth, that is, a linear measurement taken at right angles to and in the same plane as the *māna*; measurements taken at right angles to the plane, in which the *māna* and *pramāṇa* measures have been noted, are called *unmāna*, which obviously means the measure of thickness; *parimaṇa* is the name of the measurement of girths or of the periphery of images; *upamāna* refers to the measurements of interspaces, ... ; and lastly, *lambamāna* is the name given to measurements taken along plumb lines.'[2] Early texts, both iconometric and general, use many of these terms in the technical sense appropriate to each, though in several instances some difference in meaning is noticeable. It will be of interest here to refer to the section on iconometry in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* and see what terms are used there to denote the different kinds of measurement followed in image-making. Verses 1-28 of chapter 57 of this work deal with several iconometrical details and in these 28 verses many such terms occur. The word *parimāṇa*, occurring

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[2] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B, pp. 4-5. The various synonyms of the 6 kinds of measurements as laid down in the *Vaikhānasāgama* are:—*māna—āyāma, āyata, dīrgha; pramāṇa—vistāra, vistṛta, tāra, visṛti, visṛta, vyāsa, visārita, vipula, tāla, viṣkambha, viśāla; unmāna—bahala, nīvra(?), ghana, ucchrāya, tuṅga, unnata, udaya, utsedha, ucca, niṣkrama, niṣkṛti, nirgama, nirgati, rudra; parimāṇa—mārga, praveśana, nata, pariṇāha, vṛti, āvṛta; upamāna—nivṛta, vivara, antara; lambamāna—sūtra, ālambana* (or according to another reading—*sūtra, lambana, unmita*) Rao's enumeration of the above synonyms evidently on the basis of the text is a bit faulty; his errors are corrected here.

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In order to understand the canons of iconometry clearly, it is necessary to know something about the meaning and usage of certain technical terms denoting the different ways in which an image can be measured. The *Vaikhānasāgama* mentions six such ways of measurement (*mānas*), *viz.*, *māna*, *pramāṇa*, *unmāna*, *parimāṇa*, *upamāna* and *lambamāna*.[1] It also gives various synonyms of each of these terms, incidentally explaining the significance of each. Rao, on the basis of this text, writes, ' *Māna* is the measurement of the length of a body; *pramāṇa* is that of its breadth, that is, a linear measurement taken at right angles to and in the same plane as the *māna*; measurements taken at right angles to the plane, in which the *māna* and *pramāṇa* measures have been noted, are called *unmāna*, which obviously means the measure of thickness; *parimaṇa* is the name of the measurement of girths or of the periphery of images; *upamāna* refers to the measurements of inter-spaces, ... ; and lastly, *lambamāna* is the name given to measurements taken along plumb lines.'[2] Early texts, both iconometric and general, use many of these terms in the technical sense appropriate to each, though in several instances some difference in meaning is noticeable. It will be of interest here to refer to the section on iconometry in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* and see what terms are used there to denote the different kinds of measurement followed in image-making. Verses 1-28 of chapter 57 of this work deal with several iconometrical details and in these 28 verses many such terms occur. The word *parimāṇa*, occurring

[1] *Vaikhānasāgama*, as quoted by T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B, p. 60:—*Evaṃ mānāni bhavanti* | *Mānaṃ pramāṇamunmānaṃ parimāṇamupamānaṃ lambamānamiti ṣaṇmānāni*. It clearly enjoins that *etaiṣṣaṇmānairyutaṃ beraṃ kārayet*.

[2] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B, pp. 4-5. The various synonyms of the 6 kinds of measurements as laid down in the *Vaikhānasāgama* are:—*māna—āyāma, āyata, dirgha; pramāṇa—vistāra, vistṛta, tāra, visṛti, visṛta, vyāsa, visārita, xipula, tāla, viṣkambha, viśāla; unmāna—bahala, nīvra(?), ghana, ucchrāya, tuṅga, unnata, udaya, utsedha, ucca, niṣkrama, niṣkṛti, nirgama, nirgati, rudra; parimāṇa—mārga, praveśana, nata, pariṇāha, vṛti, āvṛta; upamāna—nivṛta, vivara, antara; lambamāna—sūtra, ālambana* (or according to another reading—*sūtra, lambana, unmita*) Rao's enumeration of the above synonyms evidently on the basis of the text is a bit faulty; his errors are corrected here.

only in verses 3 and 28, is used in the same sense as *pramāṇa* occurring in verse 1, meaning simply measurement; the latter, however, when used in verses 8 and 23, undoubtedly means width measurement (in verse 16 it means the inter-space measurement—*kaṇṭhāddvādaśa hṛdayaṃ hṛdayānnābhi ca tatpramāṇena*). The measurement of width is also denoted by such terms as *vistīrṇa* (4, 13. 15, 25), *vitata* (5), *pṛthula* (5), *vistāra* (6), *vipula* (9—*vaipulya* in 22), *pṛthutā*; the measurement of length is indicated by the words, *dairghya* (4, 15), *āyata* (4, 18; in verse 9 it means length sidewise), *dīrgha* (18); the measurement of height is denoted by *ucchrāya* (10), *āyāma* (14), *māna* (17), *utsedha* (19); the terms *pariṇāha* (as many as seven times—in 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 24 and 26) and *paridhi* (twice—in 22 and 23) are used to denote the girth or periphery of particular parts of images; *antara* in verses 10 and 24 undoubtedly refers to inter-space measurement, while *vedha* in verse 23 denotes depth. Utpala in the course of his comment on the above verses introduces a few other terms not used in the text; thus, he explains the term *ucchrāya* by *auccya* (10), *āyāma* by *viṣkambha* (14—*āyāmato viṣkambhādityarthaḥ*, but compare the *Vaikhānasāgama* text quoted above, where *viṣkambha* is used as a synonym of *pramāṇa*, *i.e.*, the width measurement), *pariṇāha* by *parimāṇḍalya* (22—*tat pariṇāhastayoḥ parimāṇḍalyam*) and *vedha* by *gāmbhīrya* (23). The words *māna*, *unmāna* and *pamāṇa* occur in the Jaina *Kalpasūtra* in its description of Mahāvīra's body; the passage, *mān'-unmānappamāṇa-paḍipunna - sujaya-savv-āṃga-suṃdar-āṃgam*, has been translated by Jacobi as ' a boy on whose body all limbs will be well-formed, and of full volume, weight and length ' (*S.B.E.*, XXII, p. 221). But in the light of the above observations, the three words ought to be rendered a little differently. The ancient writers themselves do not appear to have been sure of their minds. Thus, the dwellers of the Śvetadvīpa, visited by Nārada while he was trying to see the great god Hari, the original *prakṛti* of Nārāyaṇa, are described in the *Mahābhārata* as

sama-mānonmānāḥ (Vangavasi edition, XII, 335, 10). Now, *māna* meaning height in this passage, *unmāna* ought to mean width (here the measurement from the middle finger tip of the one hand to that of the other, when both the arms are outstretched opposite ways in the same line with the chest). This is really the *nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* sign of the Mahāpuruṣas, about which something has already been said; so this sense fits ill with the one which has been given to *unmāna* by Rao, *viz.*, thickness. Nīlakaṇṭha wrongly explains this *Mahābhārata* passage in his commentary when he writes, *mānaśconmāno'pamānaśca samau yeṣāṃ te*, for there can be no question of the *upamānas* (the measurement of the interspaces) being the same as the *māna* (height) and *unmāna* (really *vyāma* or *vyāyāma*, as explained above). I have suggested elsewhere that the words *māna-unmāna-ppamāṇa* in the Jaina text quoted above should be translated as ' (a body whose) *māna* and *unmāna* are *pamāṇa*, *i.e.*, full and equal ' (the word *pamāṇa* being not used in its technical sense here).[1] It has been shown that the term *pariṇāha*, according to the *Vaikhānasāgama*, is a synonym of *parimāṇa* which has been explained by Rao as the measurement of the girth or periphery. Now, Parāśara, as quoted by Utpala, while describing the *nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* sign, uses the term *pariṇāha* in the sense of *vyāyāma*. It is also used in the same sense in the *Matsyapurāṇa*, whose author fully explains it.[2]

It is time now to explain the significance of the different units, *aṅgula* and *tāla*, in terms of which the height of the Indian images was measured. The former came to be regarded as a constituent of the latter and was more universal in its application, inasmuch as it was used not

[1] *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, C. U. Press, p. 78; or if *unmāna* is taken to mean height in the *Kalpasūtra* and *Mahābhārata* passages, then *māna*, which may mean any kind of measurement, should signify *vyāyāma*.

[2] *Matsyapurāṇa*, Vangavasi edition, Ch. 42, verses, 61-2: *Mahādhanurdharāścaiva tretāyāṃ cakravarttinaḥ | Sarvvalakṣaṇapūrṇāste nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalāḥ || Nyagrodhau tu smṛtau bāhū vyāmo nyagrodha ucyate | Vyāmena tūcchrāyo yasya ata ūrddhvantu dehinaḥ | Samocchrāyaḥ parīṇāho nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalaḥ*

only in the measurement of the height as the *tāla* mainly was, but also was used in the other varieties of measurements referred to above. The term *aṅgula* served as a unit of measurement in India from very early times. In the first verse of the *Puruṣasūkta* (*R. V.*, X. 90), the Puruṣa is described as covering the whole universe and at the same time outreaching it by 10 *aṅgulas* (*Sa bhūmiṃ viśvato vṛtvā atyatiṣṭhaddaśāṅgulam*). In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (X. 2. 1, 2), the author says that Prajāpati measures the fire-altar by finger-breadths; for the sacrifice being a man, it is by means of him that everything is measured here; these fingers are his lowest measure (*tasyaiṣāvamā mātrā yadaṅgulāyaḥ*) and the measurement is taken with the help of this lowest measure. The *Śulbasūtras*, which contain the rules for the construction of raised altars (*vedīs* and *agnis*) used in the performance of *nitya* and *kāmya yajñas*, frequently refer to this unit in giving the measure of the different sections of the altars.[1] Three different kinds of *aṅgulas* are described in the iconometric texts of a comparatively late period; these are *mānāṅgula*, *mātrāṅgula* and *dehalabdhāṅgula*. The first is some sort of an absolute unit, it being derived from the width measurements of some natural objects. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* lays down that a mote in the sunbeam filtering through a lattice is known as *paramāṇu*. A *rajas* (a speck of dust) is made up of eight such *paramāṇus*; a *bālāgra* (the tip of one single hair), a *likṣā* (the egg of a louse), a *yūka* (a louse), a *yava* (barley-corn) and an *aṅgula* are each made up of eight units of its preceding object, a *bālāgra* measuring the same as eight particles of dust.[2] But this type of *aṅgula* could hardly have been used as the unit of measurement by the

[1] 'A *vedī* is a raised altar on which the *yajña* was performed and on which sat the persons performing the ceremony, namely, the sacrificer, the Hotā, the Adhvaryu, the Ṛtvik, etc. An *agni* is an altar for keeping the fire'; *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VII, p. 39.

[2] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, verses 1-2: *Jālāntarage bhānau yadaṇutaraṃ darśanaṃ rajo yāti | Tadvindyāt paramāṇuṃ prathamaṃ taddhi pramāṇānām ||*
Paramāṇurajobālāgralikṣāyūkaṃ yavo'ṅgulaṃ ceti | Aṣṭaguṇāni yathottaramaṅgulamekaṃ bhavati saṅkhyā ||

iconographers of ancient and mediæval India. The width of eight barley-corns placed side by side is far thicker than the same of the unit which was adopted by the artists in measuring the different sections of images. There is the second type of *aṅgula* known as *mātrāṅgula* or a unit of the relative type. This is arrived at on the basis of 'the length of the middle digit of the middle finger of either the sculptor or the architect, or of the rich devotee who causes a temple to be built or an image to be set up' (Rao). This relative measurement was perhaps adopted by the image-makers and the temple-builders for first ascertaining the height of a temple or an image, before they set to work out the other unit on the *dehalabdha* basis; but the latter, as I shall presently show, was principally adopted in the case of images alone. Another manner in which the *mātrāṅgula* was reached is referred to by the author of the *Śukranītisāra*; this is the fourth part of one's own fist (ch. IV, Sec. 4, Verse 82, *Svasvamuṣṭeścaturtho'ṃśo hyaṅgulaṃ parikīrttitam*). In the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* edited by P. Bose, we find in the first line of the fourth verse practically the same definition of *aṅgula* (*Pallavānāṃ caturbhāgo māpanāṃgulikā smṛtā*). Here the word *pallava* is used in place of *muṣṭi*, *pallava* evidently meaning the palm of the hand (*kara-pallava*, *cf.* the use of the word in the same sense in the *Raghuvaṃśa*, III, 7—*Lateva saṃnaddha-manojñapallava*); the fourth part of one's fist and the same of the middle of one's palm are equal in measurement. But the question is whose palm or fist is it to be? Will it be that of the sculptor, the architect or of the rich devotee? The word *sva* in the *Śukranītisāra* passage is significant. The same word occurs in the first line of the fourth verse of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (ch. 57), where the author describes the length and the breadth of the face of an image; it reads—*Svairaṅgulapramāṇairdvādaśa vistīrṇamāyataṃ ca mukham*. Utpala's commentary on the above line is very interesting; for it gives us a sure clue to the meaning of the word *sva*. It reads—*Yasmāt kāṣṭhāt pāṣāṇādikādvā pratimā kriyate*

taddairghyaṃ pīṭhapramāṇavivarjitaṃ dvādaśabhāgavibhaktaṃ kṛtvā tatraiko bhāgo navadhā kāryaḥ so'ṅgulasaṅjñā bhavati | Yasmādaṣṭādhikamaṅgulaśataṃ pratimāpramāṇaṃ vakṣyati | Svairaṅgulapramāṇairiti | Pratimāyāḥ svairātmīyairaṅgulapramāṇairmukhaṃ vadanaṃ dvādaśāṅgulāni vistīrṇaṃ vipulamāyataṃ ca dīrghaṃ kāryam.

It can be freely translated thus :—' The term *aṅgula* is derived in this manner; first, the height of the block of wood or stone out of which the image is to be made, leaving aside that portion of it on which the pedestal is to be shown, should be divided into 12 equal parts ; when one of the latter is again divided into 9 equal parts, each of these subdivisions is equivalent to the *aṅgula* unit, thus, the height of an image is 108 *aṅgulas*; lastly, the length and the breadth of the face of the image should be 12 such *aṅgulas*, *i.e.*, the *aṅgula* of the image itself.' This is really the *dehalabdha aṅgula* or *dehāṅgula* which certainly was the principal basis of the various kinds of image-measurements referred to above. But one remark can be made with regard to Utpala's manner of defining the term *aṅgula*. He says it is the 108th part of the measured material from which the image is to be made, only leaving out the pedestal (*pīṭha*). If by *pīṭha*, he means the stele (the *pīṭhikā* or *piṇḍikā* and *prabhāvalī* combined) of the image, then he is quite correct. But if he means only the pedestal, then some difficulty will arise; because, from the portion of the material without the pedestal not only the image itself, but also the *śiraścakra* (halo) of the image as well as the top section of the *prabhāvalī* was carved out. The basis of this *dehalabdha aṅgula* is also described in more or less the same way in several other texts. Thus, the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* says—*Abhipretapramāṇantu navadhā pravibhājayet | Navame bhāskarairbhakter-bhāgaḥ svāṅgulamucyate*, *i.e.*, the desired length (of the image) should be divided 9 times, each of these divisions should again be subdivided 12 times (*bhāskara*—*āditya*—12 *ādityas*), one of these subdivisions is then called an *aṅgula*. The *Nāradapurāṇa* makes a similar statement in these lines :—*Vimbamānantu navadhā procchrayāt saṃvibhājya vai | Bhāgaṃ bhāgaṃ tato bhūyo bhaveddvādaśadhā dvija | Tadaṅgulaṃ syadvimbasyeti.*[1] In all the above texts the division into 108 parts (9 × 12) refers to *navatāla* images only, not to images of larger (*daśatāla* or *uttamadaśatāla*) or smaller (*aṣṭatāla*, *saptatāla*, etc.) proportions. That images measuring 108 *aṅgulas* of their own were the commonest ones in ancient India is proved by Varāhamihira's observation that the figures of Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, and of Bali, the son of Virocana, should be 120 *aṅgulas* in height; the other groups of images belonging to the best, medium and inferior varieties are each less by 12 *aṅgulas* from its immediately preceding one, *i.e.*, the best type of image should be less than 120 *aṅgulas* by 12, *i.e.*, 108 *aṅgulas*, the medium one 12 *aṅ.* less than 108 (*i.e.*, 96) and the inferior one 84 *aṅ.*[2] The *Vaikhānasāgama* (ch. 22) supplies us with further interesting information in this connection; it lays down: *Berotsedhaṃ tattālavaśena*

[1] Both the above extracts are from *Haribhaktivilāsa*, *vilāsa* 18. The *Agnipurāṇa* says the same thing in the couplet—*Śilāṃ śilpī tu navadhā vibhājya navame'ṃśake | Sūrpa* (should be *Sūrya*)*-bhaktaiḥ śilāyāntu bhāgaṃ svāṅgulamucyate.* It should be noted that *pramāṇa* in the *Hayaśīrṣa* extract means length or height; but the words *māna* and *ucchraya* (or *ucchrāya*) in the *Nāradapurāṇa* passage are appropriately used.

[2] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 30; *Daśarathatanayo Rāmo Baliśca vairocaniḥ śataṃ viṃśam | Dvādaśahānyā śeṣāḥ pravarasamanyūnaparimāṇāḥ.* Utpala's commentary on it is worth quoting : *Daśarathaputro Rāmaḥ | Virocanaputraśca Baliḥ | Viṃśatyadhikamaṅgulaśataṃ kāryamityarthaḥ | Anyāḥ pratimā dvādaśakadvādasakahīnatvena pravarasamā nyūnaparimāṇāḥ bhavanti | Viṃśatyadhikādaṅgulaśatāddvādaśāṅgulānyapāsyāṣṭadhikaṃ śatamaṅgulānaṃ pratimā pradhānā bhavati | Tato'pi dvādaśakamapāsya ṣaṇṇavatyaṅgulasamā madhyamā bhavati | Tato'pi dvādaśakamapāsya caturaśītyaṅgulā nyūnaparimāṇā pratimā bhavati | Svairaṅgulapramāṇairdvādaśavistīrṇamāyataṃ ca mukham'-ityanena nyāyena yā pratimoktā sāṣṭāṅgulaṃ śatamadhikaṃ bhavati | Yadatroktaṃ " Daśarathatanayo Rāmo Baliśca vairocaniḥ śataṃ viṃśam " ityasmin dvādaśānāmaṅgulānāmadhikānāṃ tairadhikena parimāṇaḥ kāryaḥ sarvāvayavānām | Evaṃ hīnatve 'pyanupāta evetyanuktaṃ jñāyata iti.*

It may be incidentally remarked here that an image of Bali the demon king is mentioned along with that of Dāśarathi Rāma, one of the incarnatory forms of Viṣṇu. But Bali's image was an object of veneration to the devout Vaiṣṇavas, for he was one of the greatest devotees of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu. This is the reason why the images of the Āḻvārs and the Nāyanmārs were so very frequently given important positions in South Indian Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva shrines respectively.

vibhājyaikāṃśaṃ dehalabdhāṅgulaṃ tadaṣṭāṃśaṃ yavamiti i.e., one part (unit) arrived at by dividing the whole height of the image according to its *tāla* is a *dehalabdhāṅgula*, while one-eighth part of the latter is a *yava*. It means that if the image be a *daśatāla* one, then 1/120th part of it is its *aṅgula*, and if an *aṣṭatāla* one, 1/96th part of it is its *aṅgula* and so on. In the light of the above observation, Fleet's criticism of the term *svena=svamānena* is not applicable in the case of iconometry; he writes: 'As regards the expression *sva-mānena*, it stands to reason that the measures must be taken according to an *aṅgula* or cubit which is of a fixed standard length, not according to the varying finger-breadths and cubits of individuals who are to be measured' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1911, pp. 208-09). Again, higher units of length measurement used in texts, such as *kiṣku*, *prājāpatya*, etc., have no place in iconometry; these are undoubtedly the derivatives of *mānāṅgula*.[1] But the iconometric texts especially of a comparatively late period frequently use various synonyms of an *aṅgula* of the relative variety and of its higher multiples; it may be noted that many of these synonyms are of a figurative nature. Thus, a space of an *aṅgula* is called *indu* (moon—and there is one moon), of two *aṅgulas*, *akṣi* and *pakṣa* (two eyes and two fortnights), of three *aṅgulas*, *agni* (sacrificial fire of three kinds: *gārhapatya*, *āhavanīya* and *dakṣiṇa*), *rāma* (three *Rāmas*: Dāśarathi, Bhārgava and Balarāma), *guṇa* (three *guṇas*: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) etc.[2]

[1] The following is the measure:—

24 *aṅgulas* or *mānāṅgulas*	make	1	*kiṣku*
25	,,	,,	,,	1 *prājāpatya*
26	,,	,,	,,	1 *dhanurgraha*
27	,,	,,	,,	1 *dhanurmuṣṭi*
4 *dhanurmuṣṭis*			,,	1 *daṇḍa*.

Rao correctly remarks that 'the measure called *daṇḍa* is employed in ascertaining large lengths like that, for instance, of a street in a village'; Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B., p. 2.

[2] The *Vaikhānasāgama* supplies us with the following list:—1 *aṅgula=mūrti, indu, viśvambharā, mokṣa, ukta*; 2 *aṅgulas=kalā, golaka, aśvinī, yugma, brāhmaṇa, vihaga, akṣi, pakṣa*; 3 *aṅgulas=agni, rudrākṣi* (three eyes of Rudra), *guṇa, arṇa, kāla, śūla, rāma, varga, madhya*; 4 *aṅgulas=veda, pratiṣṭhā, jāti, kara, abjajānana* (4 faces of Brahmā, born of lotus), *yuga, tūrya, turīya*; 5 *aṅgulas=viṣaya, indriya, bhūta, iṣu, supratiṣṭhā, pṛthivī*; 6 *aṅgulas=karma, aṅga, rasa, samaya, gāyatrī, kṛttikā, kumārānana* (six faces of Kumāra or Skanda-Kārttikeya), *kauśika, ṛtu*; 7 *aṅgulas=pātāla, muni* (seven ṛṣis), *dhātu, loka, uṣṇik, rohiṇī, dvīpa, aṅga, ambhonidi*; 8 *aṅgulas=lokapāla* (Aṣṭadikpālas, the guardians of the eight quarters), *nāga, uraga, vasu, anuṣṭup, gaṇa*; 9 *aṅgulas=bṛhatī, graha* (navagrahas), *randhra* (*navadvāra*, the 9 doors or orifices of the body), *Nanda* (Nava nandāḥ, the nine Nanda Kings of Magadha), *sūtra*; 10 *aṅgulas=dik, prādurbhāva, nāḍi, paṅkti*; 11 *aṅgulas=rudra* (Ekādaśa Rudras), *triṣṭup*; 12 *aṅgulas=vitasti, mukha, tāla, yama, arka* (Sūrya—Āditya), *rāśi, jagatī*; 13 *aṅgulas=atijagatī*; 14 *aṅgulas=manu, śakvarī*; 15 *aṅ.=atiśakvarī, tithi*; 16 *aṅ.=kriyā, aṣṭi, indukalā*; 17 *aṅ.=atyaṣṭi*; 18 *aṅ.=smṛti, dhṛti*; 19 *aṅ.=atidhṛti*; 20 *aṅ.=kṛti*; 21 *aṅ.=prakṛti*; 22 *aṅ.=ākṛti*; 23 *aṅ.=vikṛti*; 24 *aṅ.=saṃskṛti*; 25 *aṅ.=atikṛti*; 26 *aṅ.=utkṛti*; 27 *aṅ.=nakṣatra* (there are 27 stars or constellations—Aśvinī, Bharaṇī, Kṛttikā, Rohiṇī, etc.). Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B, pp. 59-60; a few errors emended here have crept in Rao's translation of this part of the *Vaikhānasāgama*, *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 49: *Saumyā tu hastamātrā vasudā hastadvayocchṛtā pratimā | Kṣemasubhiksāya bhavet tricatur-hastapramāṇā yā.* Here the use of the word *pramāṇa* is to be noted; it means height or length measurement.

[2] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 3: *Devāgāradvārasyāṣṭāṃśonasya yastṛtīyo'ṃśaḥ | Tatpiṇḍikāpramāṇaṃ pratimā taddviguṇaparimāṇā ||*

I have already suggested that the other relative *aṅgula* unit (*viz.*, that based on the width of the middle digit of the medius of either the sculptor, architect or the rich devotee) might have been sometimes first adopted for ascertaining the height of the image and then the second variety of *mātrāṅgula* was worked out for the detailed measurements; but this was done on rare occasions when the images were life-size ones. There was another mode of first settling the full height of the image. Varāhamihira tells us that an image measuring one cubit (*hasta*) in height is auspicious, one two cubits high bestows riches, and those images that are three or four cubits in height ensure benefit and plenty.[1] This shows that another unit of measurement, a higher one, was also adopted by the image-makers in fixing the required height of the image. The height of those images which were meant to be enshrined in temples was also based on the same of the door of the particular temple. Thus, Varāhamihira informs us that the height of the pedestal of the image should be three parts of the height of the shrine door less the eighth part, when the latter is divided into eight parts, and the height of the image should be twice that of the pedestal.[2] The author,

however, is a little roundabout in his manner of referring to the height of the image and its pedestal. Another simpler way of fixing it in relation to the shrine door is mentioned in the *Hayaśirṣa Pañcarātra*; it says that the measure of the height of the door (shrine door) should be divided into 8 equal parts; two of these parts should constitute the height of the image and one part of it divided into three parts, the height of the pedestal, which should be neither too high nor too low.[1] It is to be noted that the surface of the pedestal should be square, its length and breadth measuring the same as the height of the image proper, according to some texts, but its height should be half the height of the image.[2] The above details generally apply to the *dhruva-beras* (in the case of Viṣṇu images) or *acala* variety of images (they may also be applicable to *calācala* variety).[3] The *Matsyapurāṇa* distinctly says that those images which are meant for worship in the private chapels of the house-holders should never measure more than a digit of the thumb or a *vitasti* (one span) at the utmost, while those that are to be enshrined in palaces, *i.e.*, temples, should measure not more than 1/16th part of the whole height of the latter; one should make an image up to this height (this is the *uttama* or best class) or less than it (of the *madhyama*, *i.e.*, middling, or *kaniṣṭha*, *i.e.*, the lowest class) according to his means, but on no account should the

[1] *Hayaśirṣa* as quoted by Gopala Bhatta: *Dvārocchrāyasya yanmāna-maṣṭadhā tattu kārayet* | *Bhāgadvayena pratimāṃ tribhāgīkṛtvā tat punaḥ* | *Piṇḍikā bhāgataḥ kāryā nātinīcā nacocchritā*‖ But the *Matsyapurāṇa* (ch. 258, vv. 24-25) with the addition of one line to the above supplies us with the information identical with that given by the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; after the first line *dvārocchrāyasya*, etc., is placed—*Bhāgamekaṃ tatastyaktvā pariśiṣṭantu yad bhavet*; then follow two lines similar to the above quoted from the *Hayaśirṣa*.

[2] *Nāradapañcarātra*, as quoted by Gopala Bhatta: *Vimbamānād yathā pīṭhaṃ kuryād devasya tacchṛṇu* | *Caturasraṃ ca tad viddhi caturasrāyataṃ tu vā*‖ *Vimbocchrāyasamaṃ pīṭhaṃ paritaścaiva vistṛtam* | *Tadarddhenonnataṃ kuryādetat sāmānyalakṣaṇam*‖

[3] Rao refers to one of the modes of classifying the images, *viz.*, *cala* (movable), *acala* (immovable, permanently placed in shrines) and *calācala* (which is permanently enshrined, but can also be removed on ceremonial occasions); *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 17.

image measure more than 1/16th part of the full height of the shrine.[1]

A few more words about the word *tāla*, already described by me as a higher unit of which the *aṅgula* became a constituent, need be said here. The *Vaikhānasāgama* informs us that a *tāla* is constituted of 12 *aṅgulas* and has as its various synonyms such terms as *vitasti*, *mukha*, *yama*, *arka*, *rāśi* and *jagatī*; of these, however, *vitasti* and *mukha* are more frequent in use. Thus, the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇa* (3) says, ' (a unit of) 12 *aṅgulas* is known as a *tāla*, *vitasti* or *mukha* ' (*Dvādaśāṅgulitālaṃ ca vitastīrmukhameva ca*). The *mukha* as well as *vitasti* is 12 *aṅgulas*; *vitasti* is the distance between the extended thumb and little finger, which is the same as the length of the middle of the extended palm (Pl. VI, figs. 2 & 3). The *Matsyapurāṇa* uses the word *mukha* in the passage *Svakīyāṅgulimānena mukhaṃ syāddvādaśāṅgulam*, *i.e.*, the *mukha* or the face of the image (equivalent to a *tāla*) should be 12 *aṅgulas* of its own; the text further states that the measurement of the height of the other limbs should be in terms of the measure of its face (*Mukhamānena karttavyā sarvvāvayavakalpanā*, ch. 258, v. 19). The author of the *Purāṇa* then lays down the whole height of the image as follows: The whole image should be divided into 9 parts in terms of its face-length; the neck should be 4 *aṅgulas*, the chest (from the bottom of the neck to the same of the breast), 1 *bhāga* (*i.e.*, *mukha* or *tāla*); (the space) from the chest to the navel, 1 *bhāga*; from the navel to the (top of the) organ, 1 *bhāga*; the thighs are two *bhāgas* and the patella of the knee, 4 *aṅgulas*; the legs (from below the knee to the top of the feet) measure two *bhāgas* in height, the feet being four *aṅgulas* high.[2] The

[1] *Matsyapurāṇa*. ch. 258, vv. 22-3: *Aṅguṣṭhaparvvādārabhya vitastiṃ yāvadeva tu* | *Gṛhe vai pratimā kāryā nādhikā śasyate budhaiḥ*‖ *Āṣoḍaśāttu prāsādaiḥ karttavyā nādhikā tataḥ* | *Madhyottamakaniṣṭhā tu kāryā vittānusārataḥ*‖

[2] *Matsyapurāṇa*, ch. 258, vv. 26-29: *Pratimāmukhamānena navabhāgān prakalpayet* | *Caturaṅgulā bhaved grīvā bhāgena hṛdayaṃ punaḥ*‖ *Nābhistasmād adhaḥ kāryā bhāgenaikena śobhanā* | *Nābheradhastathā meḍhraṃ bhāgenaikena kalpayet* | *Dvibhāgenāyatāvūrū jānunī caturaṅgule*‖ *Jaṅghe dvibhāge vikhyāte*

full height of the image as given in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* is exactly the same. Thus in verse 4 (ch. 57) we are told that the face-length is 12 *aṅgulas*; verse 5 tells us that the neck measures 4 *aṅgulas*; then in verses 16 and 17, the heights of the other parts of the body are given.[1] A glance at Plate VI, Fig. 1 will show the distribution of the height of an image measuring 108 of its own *aṅgula* and it should be noted that the part above the *keśarekhā* (hair-line) is not included in it. It is noteworthy that in none of the above texts, the word *tāla* is mentioned, though in the *Matsyapurāṇa* a brief reference is made to the *daśatāla* images of Rāma (Dāśarathi), Bali the son of Virocana, Varāha and Narasiṃha, and the *saptatāla* image of Vāmana.[2] One should refer in this connection to the *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama daśatāla* and several other varieties of the other *tāla* measurements like *navārddha tāla*, *uttama navatāla*, *satryaṅgula navatāla*, *navatāla*, *aṣṭatāla*, *saptatāla*, etc., as mentioned in such texts as the *Vaikhānasāgama*, *Kāraṇāgama*, *Śilparatna* and others. The *Vaikhānasāgama* says that images of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva should be made according to the *uttamadaśatāla* (124 *aṅgulas*), of Śrī, Bhūmi, Umā, and Sarasvatī, according to *madhyamadaśatāla* (120 *aṅgulas*), of Indra and other Lokapālas, Sūrya, Candra and the twelve Ādityas, the eleven Rudras, the eight Vasus, the Aśvins, Bhṛgu, Mārkaṇḍeya, Garuḍa, Śeṣa, Durgā, Guha (Kārttikeya) and the seven Ṛṣis, according to the *adhamadaśatāla* (116 *aṅ.*) measurement; the lord of the Yakṣas (Kubera), the Navagrahas, and other deities should measure *navārdhatāla* (114 *aṅ.*), while the lords of the Daityas,

pādau ca caturaṅgulau. The sum-total of the above is just 108 *aṅgulas*; the height of the skull or scalp is not included in the above for the reason that it is generally put inside some sort of a crown or head gear, which according to the same authority is 14 *aṅgulas* high (*Caturddaśāṅgulastadvanmaulirasya prakīrtitaḥ*).

[1] *Kaṇṭhāddvādaśa hṛdayaṃ hṛdayānnābhi ca tatpramāṇena* | *Nābhimadhyānmeḍhrāntaraṃ ca tattulyamevoktam*‖ *Urū cāṅgulamānaiścaturyutā viṃśatistathā jaṅghe*| *Jānukapicche caturaṅgule ca pādau tattulyau*.

[2] Ch. 259, *vv.* 1-2—*Daśatālaḥ smṛto Rāmo Balirvairocanistathā*‖ *Vārāho Nārasiṃhaśca saptatālastu Vāmanaḥ*. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* also, as I have already shown, refers to the 120 *aṅgula* image of Dāsarathi Rāma and Vairocani Bali, but does not use the word *tāla*.

Yakṣas (again mentioned) and the Uragas (Nāgas) as well as the Siddhas, Gandharvvas and Cāraṇas should be *uttamanavatāla* (112 *aṅ.*) high; the figures of those men who are equal to gods (*devakalpamanujas*, perhaps the same as the *mahāpuruṣas*) should measure *satryaṅgula-navatāla* (111 *aṅ.*) and those of Rākṣasas, Indras, Asuras, *navatāla* (108 *aṅ.*); *aṣṭatāla* (96 *aṅ.*) is prescribed for men, *saptatāla* (84 *aṅ.*) for Vetālas, *ṣaṭtāla* (72 *aṅ.*) for pretas, *pañcatāla* (60 *aṅ.*) for hunchbacks, *catustāla* (48 *aṅ.*) for dwarfs, *tritāla* (36 *aṅ.*) for Bhūtas and Kinnaras, *dvitāla* (24 *aṅ.*) for Kuṣmāṇḍas (? Kumbhāṇḍas) and *ekatāla* (12 *aṅ.*) for Kabandhas.[1]

It has already been shown that neither the earliest datable work on iconometry now extant, *viz.*, the earlier portion of Chap. 57 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, nor Utpala's commentary on it explicitly refers to the word *tāla* or its equivalents. Kāśyapa also, as quoted at some length by Utpala, is silent about it (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, pp 776-78). The *Pratimālakṣaṇam* (edited by me, C. U. Press, 1932) follows these earlier works and does not mention the word *tāla*. But most of the other works dealing with iconometry, which cannot be given a very early date, not only use it but also record very intricate details about it. Does it prove that *tāla* as a higher unit in iconometry was a comparatively late introduction, the earlier mode of distinguishing the well-known varieties of measurements being in terms of the lower unit, the *aṅgula*? I cannot help quoting the following lines from Gopinath Rao for elucidating my point: "The reader would be inclined to believe that the phrases *daśatāla*,

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B., p. 61. The text further says that each of the above *tāla* measurements has three varieties, *viz.*, *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama* (*teṣāṃ pratyekamuttamamadhyamādhamabhedāni bhavanti*), it being understood that the first and the last varieties are respectively 4 *aṅgulas* more and 4 *aṅgulas* less than the middle one which is normal. Śrī-Kumāra gives us a very detailed account of all these different *tāla* measurements and their sub-varieties (*Śilparatna*, T. S. S., Vol. II, pp. 34-76); about *eka-*, *dvi-*, and *tri-tāla* images, it is simply mentioned, '*Tridvyekatālameyānāṃ pratimānāṃ vicakṣaṇaḥ* | *Aṅgopāṅgādimānāni pronnayet pūrvaśāstrataḥ* '‖ The text enjoins that images of Gaṇapati (Vighneśa) should be made according to the *uttama-pañcatāla* or *madhyama-pañcatāla* measurements, some details of which are also appended. Rao has fully utilised this text in his work on iconometry (*Tālamāna*, *M.A.S.I.*, 3).

pañcatāla and *ekatāla* mean lengths equal to ten, five and one *tāla* respectively, but unfortunately this interpretation does not seem to agree with the actual measurements; for example, the total length of an image made according to the *uttamadaśatāla* measurement is 124 *aṅgulas* and the *tāla* of this image measures 13½ *aṅgulas*; dividing the total length by the length of the *tāla* we find that there are only 9 *tālas* in it; again, the total length of a *catustāla* image is 48 *aṅgulas* and its *tāla* is 8 *aṅgulas* and therefore there are 6 *tālas* in this set of proportions '' (Rao, *Tālamāna* or *Iconometry*, p. 35). His authority as regards his assertion about the length of the *tāla* in the above cases is the *āgama* literature (*cf.* his table, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37). He could not offer any satisfactory explanation of this discrepancy, his only remark being ' there is no etymological significance clearly visible in the names given to the various proportions.' It is possible that originally there was never a *tāla* unit of such varying measurements as laid down in the later āgamic literature; over and above the smaller *aṅgula* unit, a higher one computed in terms of *aṅgula* was known (used in differentiating between the *pravara*, *sama* and *nyūna* images of Varāhamihira). This larger unit was composed of 12 *aṅgulas*, but was not referred to as a *tāla* in the earlier texts. It is a pity that Nagnajit's work on iconography and iconometry (*Pratimālakṣaṇa*) has not been discovered as yet and there is no knowing whether the 14 *aṅgulas* lengthwise measurement of the face was ever described as a *tāla*. Thus it is quite likely that the *tāla* of different mesaurements was a comparatively late feature in the iconometrical system of India. The earlier method of arriving at the smaller and higher units was a much simpler and practical one. This view of mine is further supported by the fact that in all the texts, both early and late, this unit of 12 *aṅgulas* is the basis of calculation, when it is made in terms of a higher unit. Varying face-lengths in different types of images as recorded in the comparatively late iconometric texts were never mentioned in them as the higher unit on the basis of which the images were to be measured.

W. S. Hadaway explains *tāla* (he writes ' *thalam* meaning a short span ') and *aṅgula* in a slightly different way. According to him, the actual image in order to be made in accordance with one definite system, should have its total height divided into one of five different sets of proportions, *viz.*, 10, 9, 8, 7 or 5 equal parts of the whole height, *i.e.*, *daśa*, *nava*, *aṣṭa*, *sapta* or *pañca tālas* respectively; the *tāla* is now divided into 12 equal parts, each part being termed an *aṅgula*, which is again divided into 8 equal parts called *yavas* for the purpose of more minute measurements. For still more minute measurements, the *yavas* may be again subdivided, but it is seldom necessary in practice.[1] It is clear, however, on the authority of the earliest datable text that the lower limit was derived independently of the higher one at an early age. It may be observed here that Hadaway based his conclusions not only on comparatively late South Indian texts but also on the actual method followed by the modern South Indian *sthapatis*.

I have already shown that several early iconometric texts record the length of the face as equal to its width, both being 12 *aṅgulas*. But there was the Dravidian measure in which the length of the face was two *aṅgulas* more than its width, the former being 14 *aṅgulas* and the latter 12. Varāhamihira mentions the name of Nagnajit, who recorded this *Drāviḍa māna* in two verses of his chapter on *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, the first of which with Utpala's commentary on it has already been quoted by me in p. 28. In the second verse we are informed that according to Nagnajit the length or height of the face of the image with the hair on its head should be 16 *aṅgulas* (*Āsyaṃ sakeśanicayaṃ ṣoḍaśa dairghyeṇa Nagnajitproktam*, ch. 57, v. 15); Utpala supplies us with the line from Nagnajit's work in his commentary (*Tathā ca Nagnajit—Dvyaṅgulā keśarekhaivaṃ mukhaṃ syāt ṣoḍaśāṅgulam*). The length of the face of an image of the *uttamadaśatāla* variety, as laid down in the various South Indian texts like *Kāraṇāgama*, *Kāmikāgama*, *Vai-*

[1] W. S. Hadaway, ' Some Hindu Śilpaśāstras ' *O.Z.*, 1914, p. 37.

khānasāgama and *Śilparatna*, is also 13½ to 14 *aṅgulas* (according to the first two, 14 and according to the last two 13½, if we include the measurement of the small fleshy fold below the chin in it).[1] The above fact proves that the longer facial type was in vogue in South Indian iconographic art from a very early time. An interesting comparison of the Drāviḍa measure can be made with the face-length of the Buddha image as laid down in the *Pratimālakṣaṇam*. This text says that the face of the Buddha image should be 13½ *aṅgulas* long and it should be divided into 3 parts, *viz.*, the forehead, the portion beneath it down to the bottom of the nose, and thence to the end of the chin. The forehead, like the nose, should be 4 *aṅgulas*, the portion below the nose down to the end of the chin should be a little in excess (½ *aṅgulas* according to the Chinese translation of the text, and 1½ according to its Sanskrit original).[2] But the *Kriyā-samuccaya*, which includes a sort of a commentary on the above text on Buddhist iconometry, expressly says that the length of each of the three parts of the face is 4½ *aṅgulas*. Reference may be made here, *in passim*, to the face-length of the *Mālavya* type of men as referred to by Varāhamihira. The length of the face of this type of men should be 13 *aṅgulas*; the passage—*pañcāṣṭau corddhvamāsyam*—has been commented on by Utpala in the following way:—*pañca ca aṣṭau ca pañcāṣṭau trayodaśāṅgulāni | Ūrddhvamāsyamūrdhvādhamānenāsyaṃ civukāllalāṭāntaṃ yāvat trayodaśāṅgulam bhavati*. It should be noted, however, that though the full height of the Buddha image according to the above Buddhist text nearly corresponds to the same of an image of the *uttamadaśatāla* type (the former measures

[1] Rao, *Tālamāna*, p. 44:—
1. End of the front hair to the *akṣisūtra*—4 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*.
2. *Akṣisūtra to nāsikānta* (end of the nose)—4 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*.
3. *Nāsikānta to civukānta* (end of the chin)—4 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*.
Total 13 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*—*Kāraṇa* and *Kāmikāgamas*.
In the *Vaikhānasāgama* and *Śilparatna* each of the above sections is reduced by 1 *yava*, so that the total length of the face becomes 13 *aṅ*. 1 *yava*.

[2] *Pratimālakṣaṇam* (C. U. Press, 1932), vv. 2-3 (p. 10).

125 *aṅgulas* in height, thus being only 1 *aṅgula* in excess of the height of the latter), the height of a *Mālavya* type is only 108 *aṅgulas*.

It will be of interest now to compare briefly the Indian canons of proportion with those in vogue among the Egyptians and the Greeks. In instituting this comparison, a few only of the broad vertical measurements of the figures are to be taken into account, for we have very little knowledge of the intricate details about the varieties of proportions that were adopted by the artists of ancient times. I have already drawn the attention of my readers to the very early Egyptian mode of dividing an erect human figure over 18 squares, the highest of which ends not at the top of the head, but at the top of the brow, thus leaving the dome of the skull outside, as well as the head-dresses or crowns. The knee falls over the 6th square, the upper part of the legs over the 9th, the shoulders over the 16th, the nose over the 17th. The head, which occupies two squares, is thus $\frac{1}{8}$th of the rest of the body. Under the same system, the sitting figure occupies 15 squares, plus the dome of the head. Lepsius sought for the basis of these canons in the length of the foot, Wilkinson in the height of the foot, C. Blane claims to have discovered it in the length of the medius.[1] In terms of Indian iconometry, the Egyptian mode of measuring the erect human figure up to the forehead roughly corresponds to the *aṣṭatāla* measurement, a measurement which, as we have seen, is enjoined in the case of ordinary mortals. Like the Indians, the Egyptians also left the dome of the head outside because in both cases that was usually adorned with elaborate types of head-dresses.[2] The basis of the canons followed in the Egyptian figures was sought for by different scholars in different parts of the body; Blane's reference to the length of the medius reminds us of the

[1] Jean Capart, *Egyptian Art*, p. 156.

[2] P. K. Acarya is wrong when he says that the *tālamāna* as a sculptural measurement denoted a system in which the length of the face including the head is stated to be the unit. Another statement of his, *viz.*, 'an image is of *daśatāla* measure when its whole length is equal to 10 times the face including the head', is also incorrect. P. K. Acarya, *Dictionary of Hindu Architecture*, pp. 221-22.

āgamic reference to the width or length of the middle digit of the medius used as the basis in India (*cf.* the *Vaikhānasagama* passage—*Puruṣasya dakṣiṇahastamadhyamāṅgulermadhyamaparvaṇi vistāram āyataṃ vā mātrāṅgulam*). The famous statue of the Doryphorus or Canon in which the Greek sculptor Polyclitus embodied his ideas about perfect proportions of the human body can only be seen now in its imperfect copies. The completest of such copies is that from Pompeii, now in the Naples Museum ; ' it represents a young man in the very prime of athletic condition, but remarkable rather for massive strength than for agility. All his muscles are strongly developed, though we must allow something here for the exaggeration of the late copyist ; his head is large in proportion, about *one-seventh* of the total height, and its squareness of skull and rather heavy jaw imply that his athletic prowess is due rather to obstinate power of endurance than to quickness or versatility ' (E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 360-62). But the technique which was followed by the same artist in his bronze statues (of which copies only are extant) shows his artistic skill in the delineation of proportions and delicate modelling to much better advantage than it is shown in marble. The statue of an Amazon, leaning with her left elbow on a pillar, her right hand resting on her head, which is in the Berlin Museum and which has been recognised as a copy of Polyclitus's Amazon, shows the square and vigorous form of the athlete who, though female in sex, is male in modelling and proportion ; her head with its squarely shaped skull and heavy jaw resembles greatly the head of the Doryphorus. The successors of Polyclitus gradually reduced the figures to slimmer proportions ; this is proved by Praxiteles's sculpture of Hermes as the protector of youth, the original of which has been discovered by the German excavators in the Heraeum at Olympia. The figure is more slender and graceful than that of a Polyclitan athlete ; it embodies Praxiteles's ideal of Greek youth in its normal and healthy condition. Part of the right leg (from the knee to the ankle) and the whole of the left leg below the knee are broken and so we cannot

accurately determine the proportion of the head to the full height of the body, but it was certainly more than 7 : 1 which was so in the case of Polyclitus's Canon. One of his other statues, *viz.*, the Aphrodite of Cnidus (preserved only in copies), proves the same truth. The goddess, represented as preparing for the bath, shows a pronounced stoop forwards, with the weight of the body carried along the projecting right hip and resting on the right foot, the left knee being bent; even in this slightly bent posture, the full height is more than seven times her head, and had she been in an erect position, the proportion would have probably been 8 : 1. This is maintained in the works of Lysippus, one of the most prolific of the Greek sculptors who was the acknowledged and unrivalled master of the Sicyonian school 'which had contributed more than any other to the advance of academic study and the continuity of artistic tradition.' 'Thus we are told that Lysippus modified the square and heavy proportion of the Polyclitan Canon; he made the head smaller (*about one-eighth of the total height instead of one-seventh*), the body more slender and drier in texture, thus increasing the apparent height.'[1]

It will be useful, in this connection, to refer briefly to the proportion of the head to the full height of the human figure, which is normally followed by the modern artists of the west in their work. Alfred Fripp and Ralph Thompson have shown, in their work on *Human Anatomy for Art Students*, 'that the height of an average adult male is just seven and half times the measurement of the head,' observing at the same time that 'the student of art anatomy will do well to remember that the more exact the measurements which are made upon one special individual, the more liability to error is there if you attempt to lay down general rules therefrom ' (p. 255). Still, it seems the Western

[1] E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 439; *italics are mine.* Lysippus was one of the earliest sculptors to introduce the principle of making men and things, not as they were in nature (which was the mode of the earlier Greek sculptors), but as they appeared to be; that is to say, he did not so much consider the correctness to nature of the actual material form of his work, but rather the effect it produced on the eye of the spectator, and was, so far, an impressionist.'

artists generally follow this mode in representing an adult male body in art, the average female being made somewhat smaller in proportion than the average male. Now, if we leave out the measurement of the dome of the head and measure the whole height of the figure in terms of the face-length, it will appear that the full height will approximate to nearly 9 times the face, as is laid down in the early Indian *śilpaśāstras* (Pl. VI, fig. 4). The art students in the Indian art schools also are usually given this proportion when they are asked to represent an average human body.[1]

A few words are necessary here about the comparison of the ideal theory and the actual parctice. It has already been shown that there must have flourished in ancient and mediæval India different schools of image-makers who followed art traditions current in their respective localities. If we carefully analyse the large number of available iconographic and iconometric texts, we seldom fail to find differences, however slight they may be. While editing the text on Buddhist iconometry, *Samyaksambuddhabhāṣita-buddhapratimālakṣaṇam* by name, I noted some measurements of as many as 16 selected Buddha images belonging to Gandhāra, Mathura and Bihar. I found that those among them hailing from the two last mentioned places very closely approximated to the corresponding details laid down in the text ; very few of the Gandhāra Buddhas, on the other hand, tallied with the textual data. By way of comparison I measured several comparatively well-preserved images of Brahmanical divinities in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University. I found that in many

[1] Rao says that according to the canons of European art, a well-proportioned male figure is equal to eight times the length of the head, a female figure is seven and a half times that of its head. He is not quite accurate when he describes the two types as *aṣṭatāla* and *sārdhasaptatāla* respectively. He further observes, 'According to European artists the ear is said to extend from a line drawn across the side of the head on a level with the eye-brow, and another which is drawn on a level with the wing of the nose : or, in the language of the Indian artist between the *bhrūsūtra* and the *nāsāpuṭa-sūtra*. Similarly, the other rules arrived at by the Indian artist do not appear to be divergent from those evolved by the European artist;' T. A. G. Rao, *Elements*, etc., Vol. I, App. B, p. 8.

instances the appoximation of the actual practice with the theory was very great. The above sculptures, datable from the 9th-10th century onwards, were collected mainly from different parts of Eastern India, and the texts that were followed by their makers were certainly North-Indian ones. It must be observed, however, that the iconometric study of the reliefs could only be of a partial nature, the actual measurements taken with the help of anthropometric instruments being mainly of their height and rarely of their width. I append the results of my observations in Appendix C ; in Appendix B, I give the text of *Pratimāmanalakṣaṇam* and for the sake of comparison quote the relevant section of ch. 57 of *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*.[1] A comparison of these two texts will show how the latter is much simpler and practical than the former which is much more complicated and which bristles with technicalities.

I conclude this chapter by quoting the observations of V. A. Smith who was sometimes a severe critic of Indian hieratic art and Hadaway, a practical artist, about these canons. Smith says, "There is in the Hindu system nothing complicated or difficult to understand or remember, but like every other canon of artistic proportion, these methods are more capable of producing works of art in unskilled hands than are any other aids or methods.....These śāstras are the common property of Hindu artisans, whether of Northern or Southern India." (I.A., Vol. XLIV, pp. 90-91). Hadaway remarks, " The Hindu image-maker or sculptor does not work from life, as is the usual practice among Europeans, but he has, in place of the living model, a most elaborate and beautiful system of proportions, which he uses constantly, combining these with close observation and study of natural detail. It is in fact a series of anatomical rules

[1] *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* has been edited by P. Bose. But this edition is very defective, and it seems to have been based on an indifferent copy. I am indebted to my friend and sometime colleague at the Calcutta University, Dr. P. C. Bagchi, Dr. es. Lettres, for kindly allowing me to utilise a much better copy of this text brought by him from Nepal.

and formulae, of infinitely more practical use than any European system which I know of, for the Indian one treats of the actual proportion and of the surface form, rather than the more 'scientific' attachments of muscles and the articulation of bones" (*O.Z.*, 1914, p. 34).

CHAPTER IX

Cult Icons

Vyantara Devatas

It has been shown in Chapter III of this book how the element of *Bhakti* ushered in striking changes in the religious outlook of a large section of the people of India. This element had long been present in the country especially among the previous settlers and the lower orders of the Indians, who used to offer homage and adoration (*pūjā*) to the gods and goddesses of their choice. These deities were different in their essential traits from those venerated by the higher orders of the people, most of whom had their moorings in the Vedas. The transformation of a few of the latter into central deities of various orthodox cults originating in the post-Vedic period, and the appearance of newer sectarian deities as a result of the deification of some of the historical, semi-historical and mythical personages of ancient India seem to have been much influenced by the beliefs and practices of the primitive Indians. With the rise to importance of these newer cult-deities, the primitive folk gods and goddesses were relegated to the position of inferior or secondary deities described in early Jaina texts as Vyantara Devatās. In the changed set-up of the religious life of the people, most of them became accessories and attendants of the chosen divinities of the various sectaries, or of their principal aspects, while others appeared in the role of the opponents of the higher gods. But there can be no doubt that it was these primitive deities and their worship, which lay at the root of the evolution of the various cults associated with Brahmanical Hinduism, and to a certain extent with the development of Buddhism and Jainism. One of the five recognised Brahmanical Hindu cults, *viz.*, that of Gaṇapati,

retained to a great extent in the iconic type of its central deity its primitive form, and some of the forms of the principal deities of the other major Brahmanical cults seem to have been appreciably influenced by the earlier image types of the various folk divinities.

The Jaina canonical literature enumerates the Vyantara Devatās usually in this manner: Piśācas, Bhūtas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Kinnaras, Kimpuruṣas, Mahoragas (Nāgas) and Gandharvas. The Buddhist texts also mention similar orders of divinities as Devas, Yakṣas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garuḍas, Kinnaras and Mahoragas. Various sections of Brahmanical Hindu literature contain not only the names of these, but add many more names of such mythical beings, as Kumbhāṇḍas, Kabandhas, Daityas, Dānavas, Apsarasas, Siddhas, Sādhyas, Vidyādharas, Pramathas, Gaṇas, etc. In fact, most, if not all, of these different groups are common to the various early texts of India. The word ' Deva ' (or ' Devatā ') in the Buddhist list is of special significance in this context, for it denotes the original character of many of these beings of which the Yaksas and the Nāgas form the most important and interesting groups. These two along with the groups of the Gandharvas and the Apsarasas occupy also a very prominent place in the Brahmanical Hindu mythology. Reference may be made in this connection to the first three lines of the *mantra* recited by many Hindus in the *tarpaṇa* and *śrāddha* ceremonies when they offer water and other objects to the manes (Pitṛgaṇas), mythical heroes like Rāma and Bhīṣma, the gods, the Yakṣas and others. These three lines contain the names of most of the orders of these Vyantara Devatās: Devas, Yakṣas, Nāgas, Gandharvas, Apsarasas, Asuras, Sarpas, Suparṇas (Garuḍas), Trees (sacred ones), Jihmagas (a class of sacred reptiles), Khagas (sacred birds), Vidyādharas, Jalādhāras (sacred acquatic animals), Ākāśagāmis (Sādhyas and Siddhas), etc.[1]

[1] *Devā Yakṣāstathā Nāgā Gandharvāpsaraso'surāḥ | Krūrāḥ Sarpāḥ Suparṇāśca taravo Jihmagāḥ Khagāḥ | Vidyādharā Jalādhārāstathaivākāśagāminaḥ |*

Whatever may be the root meaning of the word *Yakṣa*[1], it does not fail to make its appearance in the Vedic literature in the sense of a class of beings, supernatural no doubt, but undoubtedly of a category far dissimilar to the order of the proper Vedic divinities. One of the earliest allusions to the Yakṣas is to be found in the *Atharvaveda* where they are named as Itarajanāḥ, ' other folks '; in the Paippalāda version of the same text, however, the word used is ' Puṇyajanāḥ ', ' sacred folks '. In later lexicons, both the words *Puṇyajana* and *Itarajana* are regarded as the synonyms of the word Yakṣa, and that this was also their meaning in the *Atharvaveda* passage is proved by the mention of Kubera or Vaiśravaṇa as the king of the Yakṣas (Yakṣeśa, Yakṣarāja, Yakṣendra, etc.); in the developed mythology of later times, he was also the guardian of the northern quarter (Uttaradikpati). The association of the Yakṣas and their king Kubera with riches (he is also called Dhanapati, Nidhipati) and one of their principal appellations, Guhyakas, mainly indicative of ' concealment ', may also be traced to this *Atharvaveda* passage. Reference is made in it to the ' milking of " concealment " (*tirodhā*) out of the Universe (Virāj) by the "Rajatanābhi son" of Kā(au)bera '.[2] The Yakṣapati or Guhyakapati Vaiśravaṇa is referred to by Patañjali in his *Mahābhāṣya* several times, though his more common name Kubera is not mentioned. While commenting on *Vārttika* 2 on Pāṇini's *Sūtra* VI. 3, 26 (*Devatādvandve ca*) he appears to distinguish between two different types of divinities, namely, *Vaidika* and *Laukika*, and the gods mentioned in this context by him can be placed under these two different groups. The names of the gods included in the two

[1] ' Vedic Yakṣa, quick, ray of light, but also " ghost ", from *yakṣ* to move quickly; perhaps, swift creatures, changing their abode quickly and at will ': Rhys Davids and Stede, *Pāli-English Dictionary*, under *Yakkha*. In the Pāli commentaries, the word *Yakkha* means ' a being to whom a sacrifice (of expiation or propitiation) is given '. Coomaraswamy thinks that the word is non-Aryan in its origin.

[2] *A.V.*, VIII. 10. 28: *Sodakrāmatsetarajanānāgacchattāmitarajanā upāhūyanta tirodha ehīti. Tasyāḥ Kubero Vaiśravaṇo vatsa āsīdāmapātraṃ pātram. Tāṃ Rajatanābhiḥ Kāberako'dhoktām tirodhāmevādhok.*

compounds, *Śiva-Vaiśravaṇau* and *Skanda-Viśākhau*, undoubtedly fall under the *Laukika* (folk) group. Again, while commenting on Pāṇini's *Sūtra*, V. 2, 129 (*Vātātisārābhyāṃ kukca*), he says that Vaiśravaṇa had Piśācas (as his attendants—*piśācakī Vaiśravaṇaḥ*). There can be little doubt that the commentator refers here to the Yakṣa attendants of Kubera, described here as Piśācas. His commentary on *Vārttika* 2 on *Sūtra* III. 1, 133 (*nvultṛcau*), clearly refers to the raised pedestals of (the images of) Vaiśravaṇa (*utthitā āsakā Vaiśravaṇasyeti*). Lastly, while commenting on *Sūtra* II. 2, 34 (*alpāctarau*), he refers to the temples of Dhanapati (Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa), Rāma (evidently Balarāma) and Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) where various kinds of musical instruments were played on in the assemblage of the worshippers (*mṛdaṅgaśaṅkha-tūṇavaḥ pṛthaññadanti saṃsadi prāsāde Dhanapati-Rāma-Keśavānām*).

Patañjali's evidence regarding the existence of Yakṣa images and shrines is corroborated by early Buddhist and Jaina texts, copious references to which have been collected by Coomaraswamy in his *Yakṣas* (Part I, pp. 17 ff.). The *Mahābhārata* tells us that there were far-famed shrines of Yakṣiṇīs at Muñjavaṭa and Rājagṛha where daily (*naityaka*) rituals were performed (III. 83, 23 and III. 84, 85). The *Agnipurāṇa*, while referring to respective positions of the temples of different deities in a town, enjoins that those of Yakṣa and Guha (Kārttikeya) should be set up in the northern sector of it (*saumye Yakṣa-Guhasya ca*; Ch. 39, verse 12). It is a fact, however, that iconographic texts systematised at a comparatively late date seldom contain any explicit description of the Yakṣa images. T. A. G. Rao has collected several texts descriptive of such iconographic types as Vasus, Nāgas (Nāgadeva), Sādhyas, Asuras, Apsarasas, Piśācas, Vetālas, etc., from various sources, but no mention of the Yakṣa type is made by him (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, Appendix B, Pratimālakṣaṇāni, pp. 271-76). So, Hemādri's characterisation of it on the basis of the *Mayasamgraha* is of great interest: ' the Yakṣas should be made pot-bellied, two-armed, holding *nidhis* in their hands, and (be shown) fierce (due to)

drunkenness; (their lord) Vaiśravaṇa should hold a club in his hand '.[1] But there is no dearth of texts describing the iconic type or types of the chief of the Yakṣas, the reason undoubtedly lying in the fact that he was regarded as one of the Guardians of the Eight Quarters (Aṣṭadikpālas). Some of the important Vedic gods like Indra, Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa and others were his companions in this set-up, and thus he could command sufficient iconographic notice along with them. A careful study of such texts characterising his images brings out several important traits; these are: he is usually two-armed (rarely four), holding a club or mace (*gadā*) in one of his hands, accompanied by two *nidhis* (*śaṅkha* and *padma*) personified or not, is sometimes terrific in appearance, has either a man (*nara*, no ordinary or mortal man, but some mythical anthropomorphic type) or a lamb for his mount, is pot-bellied and long-armed. But the fairly long description of Dhanada given in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, Ch. 53, Vv. 1-7) contains some interesting additional iconographic traits, the most important of them being his northerner's dress and armour (*apīcyaveśa*, *kavacī*), his four hands (the right ones carrying a mace and a spear, the left, a jewel and a pot), his fangs and moustache, and his consort Ṛddhi (Prosperity personified) seated on his left lap. There can be little doubt that many of these features are based on an iconographic type derived from the Kubera (sometimes described as Pañcika) and Hāritī compositions of the Hellenistic art of Gandhāra.[2] It may also be noted here incidentally that the Kubera figures of the early and late mediaeval periods usually carved on the outer faces of Vaiṣṇava or Śaiva shrines as a Dikpāla retain the pot-bellied feature and hold either a bag or sack (evidently of treasure),

[1] *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*. Vol. II, Vratakhaṇḍa, Pt. I, p. 138; *Tundilā dvibhujāḥ kāryyā nidhihastāḥ madotkaṭāḥ Gadī Vaiśravaṇaḥ* ..... Hemādri mentions in this connection the names of such Yakṣas as Siddhārtha, Maṇibhadra, Sumanā, Nandana, Kaṇḍuti, Pāñcaka, Śaṅkha, Maṇimān, Padma, Rāmaka and others, and their king is described as Dhanādhipa (Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa).

[2] The different iconographic texts collectively noticed above are in T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, App., pp. 263-65. Kubera-Hāritī reliefs from Gandhāra have been studied by Foucher in his lecture on the Tutelary Pair in Gaul and India published in *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, pp. 140-46, Pl. XVIII.

or is shown squeezing the neck of a mongoose vomiting jewels; they are generally seated on lotus in *ardhaparyaṅka*, the dangling leg resting upon either two jars (indicating the *nidhis, śaṅkha* and *padma*) or eight jars, one of which is upturned, representing the *aṣṭanidhis*: *padma, mahāpadma, makara, kacchapa, mukunda, nīla, nanda* and *śaṅkha* (according to the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* list).

In comparing theory with the actual practice of the ancient Indian iconographers, we should bear in mind that though Yakṣa types of the Maurya-Śuṅga period are known, there is no corresponding iconographic texts of that period. It has been suggested on several occasions in this book that in most cases the actual iconic types of very early times were at the root of these texts, and this can be well demonstrated in this connection. A glance at the Yakṣa image from Parkham (Mathura Museum), Patna Yakṣas (Indian Museum) and Maṇibhadra Yakṣa (Gwalior Museum) shows how the *tundila* (pot-bellied) trait of the Yakṣas was incorporated in a much later text utilised by Hemādri. In most of these images, the head and hands are either gone or grievously damaged, thus making recognition of many other features difficult and sometimes impossible. The Parkham Yakṣa shows the Indian dress with long waist- and chest-bands, necklace, and broad breast-chain (*graiveyakahārabharī*) and ear-ornaments; its hands are gone, and thus we do not know what (if any) objects were placed in them. The Patna Yakṣas are slightly differently dressed, but there cannot be any doubt about the Indian character of their dresses. Maṇibhadra (Pl. XIII, Fig. 3) wears thinner waist- and chest-bands and appears to have a sacred thread worn in the *upavītī* fashion; a round pot-like object, it may be a purse or encased treasure (*nidhi*), hangs from his left hand, while his right hand (broken) seems to have held a yak-tail, the latter object being apparently one of the attributes of the Patna Yakṣas.[1] The original pedestals, wherever they are

[1] For a detailed discussion about the Patna, Parkham and Pawaya sculptures, *cf.* R. P. Chanda's article on 'Four Ancient Yakṣa Statues' in *J.D.L.*, Vol. IV (1921), pp. 47-84.

preserved, are all very high, and this fact explains Patañjali's observation about Vaiśravaṇa's 'raised pedestal' (*utthitā āsakā Vaiśravaṇasya*) noted above. All these images, as also several other extant images of more or less similar types, were cult objects regularly worshipped by their devotees (the pedestal inscription of the Maṇibhadra image clearly proves it), and were set up in different shrines. But shrines might not necessarily mean structural temples in all cases, and many were the images that were placed under big leafy trees with which these Yakṣas were prominently associated. It may be incidentally observed here that the usual association of many of the higher cult deities like Viṣṇu and Śiva with particular trees (referred to in Brahmanical religious texts as *sthala vṛkṣas*) should be traced to this primitive custom of associating these folk divinities with different trees. Reference has already been made in Chapter VI of this book to the solicitation of the ritualists to the spirits residing in the tree (being felled for its wood to be used for making a divine image) to leave it and reside elsewhere (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, v. 11). Some early archaeological evidence in support of this trait of the primitive folk cults may be noted here. Plate VIII, figure 5 of this book contains a line drawing of an Amaravati sculpture in which a human face is shown on a tree-trunk; there is no doubt that the face stands for the spirit residing in the tree. Another fragmentary sculpture (Pl. XIII, Fig. 2) finally settles this point; it shows the head and upper part of a big-eyed Yakṣa beneath some sort of a structure with the top portion of a tree and probably a heap of coins arranged in cylindrical form in the background. The inscription in Brāhmī script of the 2nd or 1st century B.C. gives out the identity of the Yakṣa as Candramukha, and of the particular tree where it dwelt as Vakula (the tree in the relief may stand for this species botanically known as *Mimusops Elengi*).[1] It is unfortunate

[1] The inscription was read by R. P. Chanda as *Yagocada mugovaka nivesi*. But there is no doubt about its correct form read by Sivaramamurti, which is *Yakho cadamukho vaku(la)nivāsi* meaning 'the Yakṣa Candramukha, the dweller of the Vakula (tree)'. Sivaramamurti remarks, 'The presence of a tree and a

that the figure of Candramukha Yakṣa, the dweller of the Vakula tree, was not found intact, and we are not in a position to say what its attributes and mount were. It is probable, however, that his hands might have been in the *namaskāra mudrā*, as the hands of Kubera and some other Yakṣas in Bharhut are, their role, here and at Bharhut, being that of so many worshippers of Buddha. The extant Yakṣa figures on the Bharhut rail have been labelled by the artists of Bharhut as Viruḍako Yakho, Kupiro Yakho, Ajakālako Yakho, Gāṅgeya Yakho, Sucīlomo Yakho and Supavāso Yakho. Of them Virūḍaka and Kubera Yakṣas are the guardians of the southern and northern quarters respectively, while the other four are not associated with any major or minor quarters. But the Bharhut artists appear to have distinguished their separate identities by means of different mounts (*vāhanas*) or pedestals shown under them. Virudaka Yakha (Virūḍhaka Yakṣa), Kupiro (Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa), Gāṅgeya (Gaṃgito in the Pāli texts), Sūcīloma (the ' needle-haired '), Supavāsa (Supravāsa)—all have their hands in the *namaskāra mudrā* and are dressed in a similar manner, but they have different mounts beneath them. Thus, Kubera stands on the back of a malformed pot-bellied Yakṣa sitting on his haunches (Pl. XIII, Fig. 1), Virūḍhaka, on a high rocky ground (trees are shown on either face of the pedestal), Gaṃgito's right leg is placed on the top of a tree, while his left one is firmly placed on the back of a tusker, Sūcīloma stands erect on the coping stone (*uṣṇīṣa*) of a railing (*vedikā*), and Supravāsa stands with right knee slightly bent on a caparisoned tusker trotting to right. Ajakālaka, whose hands are shown in different poses (his right hand holds a half-blossomed lotus-flower, his left hand being in the *kaṭihasta pose*) stands in a graceful pose on the back of a composite animal, unfortunately very much broken, with

Caitya beside the Yakṣa (named Candramukha) should explain the word *vaku*, for Yakṣas often lived in trees. The tree should then no doubt be a *vakula* tree (*Mimusops Elengi*), the sculptor having missed the letter *la* ': *Amaravati Sculptures*, p. 82

' the tail of a *makara* (a mythical aquatic animal somewhat resembling an alligator) and the forelegs of a lion or tiger '.

The unnamed figure carved on one of the uprights of the Bharhut railing, however, does not seem to belong to any order of the Vyantara Devatās. It was described by Cunningham as a foreign soldier on account of its dress and other features (some sort of foot-wear, close-fitting coat and broad sword). R. P. Chanda on the same grounds identified it as Asura (demon) Vipracitti who is described in the *Saṃyukta Nikāya* as wearing boots and moving about armed with a dagger. Barua would identify it as Mihira, the Iranian Sun God, on account of its northern dress (*udīcya-veśa*, the main characteristic of the North Indian Sūrya image). But none of these suggestions appears to be correct, for they do not account for ' the broad band or ribbon fastened at the back of the head in a bow with its long ends streaming in the end ' (Cunningham). Cunningham could not understand its significance, though his description of it is correct. It seems to be nothing but the Indian way of representing the ' diadem ', the unmistakable sign of Greek royalty. This feature and the non-Indian dress as well as the grape-bunch in its right hand led me to suggest that the figure may be an idealised representation of some Indo-Greek king, probably Menander, who had close connection, political and cultural, with Indian interior (Pl. XIII, Fig. 4).[2]

Several unnamed figures which may represent Yakṣas are found in Bharhut, the identifying inscriptions by their side being lost, their exact identity cannot be ascertained; many such figures in the early Buddhist art of India leave little doubt about the existence of an elaborate iconography of the primitive deities long before the iconographic details of the higher cult gods and goddesses were systematised,—some on the lines of these earlier folk deities. When,

[1] For elaborate comments on these Bharut reliefs and their reproductions, see B. M. Barua, *Bharut*, Vol. II, pp. 57 ff., and Vol. III, Plates LV-LIX.

[2] For fuller details in support of my suggestion, *cf.* my article ' A Bharhut Railing Sculpture ' in *Proceedings of the Bombay Session of the Indian History Congress* (1947), pp. 65-8.

however, this was done, the latter had been much absorbed in the principal divinities or their various aspects, and many details about their earlier iconographic traits were forgotten and not canonised. We meet their counterparts in the various gate-keepers (dvārapālas) of the shrines of a Śiva or a Viṣṇu, and in similar other accessories of the cult-deities. The *Mahābhārata* (III. 83, 9 and 52 and 208) seems to indicate this process of gradual transformation, when it emphasises the association of the Yakṣas as ' treasure-hiders ' with the Nāgas, the former being described as the ' gate-keepers of the Nāga-Tīrtha at Kurukṣetra, *viz.*, Arantuka and Tarantuka on one side and Macakruka on the other; these are Yakṣa gate-keepers, as well as places bounding the holy land '.[1] But Kubera, the lord of the Yakṣas, did not lose his separate entity even in much later times, though his image was necessarily of a subsidiary character. Reference may be made here to one such icon of the god belonging to the late Gupta period, now in the collection of the Mathura Museum. Two-armed bejewelled Kubera, slightly pot-bellied, is shown seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose on a cushioned seat beneath which are two jars (of treasure, perhaps symbolising the *śaṅkha*- and *padma-nidhis*) on one of which his right leg is placed; he holds a cup in his right hand and a pouch in his left and is shown attended on either side by a bearded male, and a female (Pl. XIV, Fig. 2). The iconography has no doubt developed to a great extent by this period, but its former traits are not altogether obliterated.

The next group of folk gods and goddesses retained till much later times their iconographic entity to a greater degree, though here also elaborate developments took place. The Nāgas and the Nāginīs had far more individualistic iconographic traits from the earliest times, and the wide prevalence of the ' snake-cult ' in India also explains their retention. Before the question of the iconographic types is discussed it is necessary to say a few words about the cult

[1] E. W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, p. 149.

itself. The practice of adoration of the serpent is very primitive in India and it has also some Vedic association (most probably the result of the culture contact of the Aryans with the previous settlers of India). The Ṛgvedic Ahi budhnya, the ' serpent of the Deep ', representing the beneficent aspect of Ahi Vṛtra, may stand for an atmospheric deity; in this association the serpent form seems to be emphasised more or less figuratively. But many passages in the later Vedas, like the *Yajus* and the *Atharva*, especially in the latter, unmistakably refer to the great awe and veneration in which these dread, and at the same time beautiful, objects of nature were held. Various snake-gods are mentioned by name in the *Atharvaveda* in different contexts,[1] and they are associated in some passages with the Gandharvas, Apsarasas, Puṇyajanas (Yakṣas) and the Manes (VIII, 8, 15 : *Gandharvāpsarasaḥ sarpāndevānpuṇyajanānpitṛṇ*). Five among them, Tiraścirājī, Pṛdāku, Svajo, Kalmāsagrīvo and Svitro are the respective guardians (*rakṣitā*) of the southern, western, northern, eastern and upper quarters. Nay, even in one of these *Atharvaveda* passages (VIII. 10, 29) we find probably the first mention of the epic Takṣaka described here as a descendant of Viśāla (*Takṣako Vaiśāleyo*). Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the son of Irāvant (*Dhṛtaraṣṭra-Airāvato*) is also named in this connection as the person who milked poison, the subsistence of the serpents, from Virāj (the Universe); Dhṛtarāṣṭra is sometimes the name of a Nāgarāja in later Brahmanical and Buddhist texts. He is the best of the Nāgas according to a *Mahābhārata* passage (IV. 2, 17), and the later confusion between the two meanings of the word *nāga* (' a snake ' and ' an elephant ') seems to be present in another statement in the same passage that Airāvaṇa (in southern recension, Airāvata) is the best among elephants. The Great Epic also mentions one Manimat, a Nāga, and the

[1] *A. V.*, III. 26 & 27; V. 13, 5-6; VII. 56, 1 : X. 4, 13. Some of the names are Tiraścirājī, Asita, Svaja, Babhru, Pṛdāku, Kaṅkaparvan, Kairāta, Pṛṣṇa, Upatṛṇya, Taimāta, Apodaka, Śvitra, etc. These names are not common in the epic and Purāṇic texts though in the name of Babhruvāhana, the son of Arjuna and the Nāga princess, we may find the survival of the Vedic Babhru,

name perhaps contains an allusion to the common belief persistent through the ages that the serpents bear jewels on their hoods. The epic and Purāṇic tales about the Nāgas being the sons of Kadru and many other myths associated with them leave little doubt about the fact that popular imagination was greatly excited about them. Their names were many, and as in the case of the Yakṣas and the Yakṣiṇīs, the Nāgas and the Nāginīs were some of the most common among the folk divinities. The *Gṛhyasūtra* account of the ' Sarpabali ', the performance of which annual rite was prolonged for no less a period than the four months of the rains, served ' the two-fold purpose of honouring and warding off the snakes '. The custom of worshipping the Aṣṭanāgas (Vāsuki, Takṣaka, Śeṣa, Ananta and others) and the snake goddess Manasā during the rains and especially in the Nāgapañcamī day (usually falling in the month of Śrāvaṇa), even now current in Bengal, seems to be the popular counterpart of the Sarpabali of the *Gṛhyasūtras*. The early Buddhist and Jaina religious texts also do not fail to supply us many interesting facts about the wide prevalence of the popular cult in India. Vogel has rightly drawn our attention to the passage in the *Cullavagga* (V. 6) ' in which four tribes of serpent-kings (*ahirāja-kulāni*) are mentioned '. The names of the kings are Virupākkha, Erapatha (Elāpatra), Chabyāputta and Kaṇhagotamaka; of these the first two are well known in Buddhist literature.[2] The Buddhist texts frequently refer also to various Nāga chiefs like Muca(i)linda, Kāliya, Apalāla and others who came to pay respects to the Buddha on different occasions. There are many early reliefs hailing from different places of India where these themes are illustrated. Reference should be made in this connection to the epic and Purāṇic account of Kṛṣṇa's encounter with Nāga Kāliya of the Mathura region, and his victory over and severe chastisement of the serpent chief, the inner signi-

[1] The belief is very old; Varāhamihira says, " The snakes of the lineage of Takṣaka and Vāsuki, and the snakes roaming at will (*kāmagāḥ*) have bright blue-tinged pearls in their hoods " (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, LXXXI, 25).

[2] J. P. H. Vogel, *Indian Serpent Lore*, p. 10.

ficance of the whole story being the supersession of the more primitive Nāga cult by the newer and more generally accepted Kṛṣṇa cult of the Mathura region (*cf. supra*, p. 112). A candidate for admission to the Buddhist order was often asked whether he was a Nāga or not (Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 44). It may be presumed that the question was put to ascertain whether the particular person was primarily an adherent of the Nāga cult or not.

Before I describe some of the early and late iconographic types of the Nāgas and the Nāginīs as represented in Indian art, I shall refer only to a few of the texts of the mediaeval period, which describe the Nāga or Nāginī types. This is necessary to show in what manner the nature of the latter was determined by the former. Hemādri quotes five couplets from Maya (evidently *Mayasaṃgraha* from which he takes his materials for the description of the Yakṣas), where the peculiarities of the figures of Takṣaka, Karkoṭaka, Padma, Mahāpadma, Śaṅkhapāla and Kulika Nāgas are described. In the last part of the extract are given the following common traits of the iconographic type : ' the Nāgas have two tongues and arms, and seven hoods with jewels on them; they hold rosary of beads (*akṣasūtra*) in their hands and are endowed with curling tails; their wives and children bear either one or three hoods '.[1] The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, Ch. 65, verses 2-8) describes Ananta Nāga as ' four-armed, endowed with many hoods with the beautiful earth goddess standing on the central hood; in the right hands of the god are to be placed a lotus and a pestle, while his left hands should hold a ploughshare and a conch-shell '. Mention here of the ' sea of liquor ', ' palm tree ' and other features in association with the divine Nāga leaves little doubt that Ananta in this context is no other than an incarnation of the Lord Visnu, and is closely associated from the iconographic point of view with Saṃkarṣaṇa or Balarāma. The 17th century text of *Śilparatna* characterises the iconography of the

[1] Hemādri, *op. cit.*, p. 139. The last three lines of the text read : *Dvijihro bāhavaḥ sapta phaṇāmaṇisamanvitaḥ | Akṣasūtradharāḥ sarve kuṇḍikāpucchasaṃyutāḥ | Ekabhogāstribhogā vā hyetajjāyāsutādayaḥ ||*

Nāgas in two couplets: these verses lay down that ' the Nāgas are human in shape from the navel upwards, their lower part being serpentine in form; they have encircling hoods on their heads; the hoods may be one, three, five, seven or nine; they should have two tongues, and should hold a sword and a shield in their (two) hands '.[1]

Two of the earliest figures of the Nāgarājas are to be found in the Bharhut railings. Of these that of Elāpatra on the Prasenajit pillar in the scene of the Nāga chief's meeting the Buddha is very interesting. Plate XIV, Fig. 1, depicts first the five-hooded Nāgarāja in his natural form in his element (water) with a damsel standing on his middle hood (*cf.* the *Viṣṇudharmottara* description of Ananta); then in the right corner he is shown advancing towards the left with his hands in the *namaskāra mudrā* accompanied by his queen and daughter, and lastly in the left corner he alone is shown kneeling down and paying homage to the Buddha symbolised by the Bodhi tree with Vajrāsana beneath it. In the second appearance of Elāpatra, only the upper parts of him and his queen and daughter are shown, and they are all human with the snake-hoods behind their heads, the two ladies having only one hood each (*cf.* the *Mayasaṃgraha* description of the Nāginīs) Finally, we see the all-human Nāgarāja making his obeisance to the master, his five snake-hoods being shown sideways on his head by the artist in order that the spectator may have a full view of them. Cakravāka Nāgarāja on another Bharhut railing is shown standing with his hands in the *namaskāra mudrā* on a high rock by the side of a lotus lake, having a heavy turban and the usual five snake-hoods; here also the figure is all human except the hood attachment behind the head. These as well as similar other figures in the early Buddhist art of Central India, Gandhāra and Amaravati are to be understood as representing the Nāgas assuming some-

[1] *Silparatna* (as quoted by T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Appendix B, p. 274): *Nāgānāṃ vakṣyate rūpaṃ nābherurdhvaṃ narākṛtiḥ | Sarpākāramadhobhāgaṃ mastake bhogamaṇḍalam‖ Ekaṃ phaṇātrayaṃ vāpi pañca vā sapta vā nava | Dvijihvāste vidhātavyāḥ khaḍgacarmakarairyutāḥ‖*

times the almost complete human form in the presence of the Buddha, just as the Yakṣas (the names of some of them are probably indicative of their original beast form,—*cf.* the name Sūcīloma, perhaps it describes a porcupine) hid some of their ungainly physical features before the Master. But the Nāga images, found in the Mathura region and mostly to be dated in the early centuries of the Christian era, are real cult objects, inasmuch as they were enshrined by their votaries. A Sanskrit inscription (in the Lucknow Museum collection) tells us of a local deity, by the name of Dadhikarṇa, whose shrine was probably near the Buddhist Vihāra founded by Huvishka in the year 47 (Kanishka Era). The Nāga image from Chargaon (a village, 5 miles due south of Mathura) is a typical cult object of this type where the hoods (now their number is raised to seven) are ' part of a complete serpent whose coils are plainly visible both at the front and at the back of the sculpture '. The dual nature of Nāgadeva is fully given expression to by the artist ' by portraying a human being standing in front of a polycephalous serpent '.[1] The type in a modified form was similar to Baladeva, one of whose aspects is based on a trait of this primitive folk cult.

Most of the Nāga and the Nāginī figures of the Gupta and later periods are shown in the role of accessories to the higher cult gods, especially Viṣṇu. Their hybrid iconographic type is retained; but when the figures of Ādi, Śeṣa or Ananta Nāga are shown as so many seats or couches of Viṣṇu seated or lying down, they are usually represented in their original form of huge polycephalous snakes with many coils. Śeṣa Nāga or his consort in the Varāha reliefs are shown, however, according to the conventional hybrid form, their upper part being human and lower, serpentine. But

[1] J. P. H. Vogel, *op. cit.*, p. 42, Pl. V(*a*) and (*b*). Vogel emphasises the spirited attitude of the standing Nāga with his raised right arm (left broken, probably the hand held a cup). The inscription engraved on the back of the image shows that it was originally set up at a tank during Huvishka's time (year 40 of the Kanishka Era). The Kukargam Nāga image also reproduced by Vogel (*op. cit.*, Pl. VI*b*) has the upper part much better preserved; the cup in the left hand and the raised right hand are in tact (is the right hand in the *abhaya* pose?). The Nāga appears to wear a *vanamālā*.

shown singly, the Nāga appears as a human being with snake-hoods attached behind his head. This motif is illustrated by the very beautiful Nāga image from Khitching in the district of Mayurbhanj (Orissa) reproduced here (Pl. XIV, Fig. 3). The two-armed Nāga stands in a charming pose (*dvibhaṅga*) holding a long thick garland in his two hands, wearing many ornaments, and having a graceful canopy of seven hoods. But the exquisite Nāginī figure from the same place is part woman and part serpent, her lower half coiling round a column; she has three hoods in accordance with the iconographic texts, and holds a yak-tail (*cauri*) and a pitcher in her right and left hands respectively (Pl. XX, Fig. 1). It is profitable to compare these two beautiful art objects of Orissa of the mediaeval period with two hieratic figures of Nāginīs from Central and Eastern India. The first of these hails from Sutna (Madhya Pradesh) and shows an elaborate composition with the central figure of the Nāginī, an eight-armed female seated in *lalitākṣepa* on a double-petalled lotus spread on the back of a roaring lion, with various attendants on all her sides (Pl. XX, Fig. 4). The goddess is otherwise human in appearance, but her snake-hoods (possibly seven in number, this being a departure from the textual injunction) and a large number of hands distinguish her from ordinary mortals. In order to establish her identity definitely the artist engraves the label—*Śrī Nāiṇi* (Śrī Nāginī) in mediaeval Brāhmī characters. She may illustrate the Jaina version of the snake goddess, her Brahmanical counterpart being Manasā. The latter is represented by the other relief hailing from Birbhum in West Bengal. The seven-hooded and two-armed goddess is seated in the same pose on a double, petalled lotus placed over a jar from which two snakes are coming out; she wears various ornaments among which is shown a *sarpa-kucabandha* (breast-band made of snakes) and holds a hoeded snake in her left hand, the object in her right hand being indistinct; Jaratkāru and Āstika, her husband and son respectively according to the epic and Purānic tradition, are seated on either side of her. Both the sculptures stand for the snake goddess conceived in different ways,

and their divine character is emphasised by the number of hoods and of the hands in the case of the former.

The Gandharvas and Kinnaras are two other classes of mythical beings of a semi-divine character, which played a secondary part in the religious literature and art of ancient and mediaeval India. One of the earliest references to the former is to be found in the same section of the *Atharvaveda* (VIII. 10) wherefrom the allusions to the Yakṣas and the Nāgas have been cited above. The Gandharvas are mentioned in this context with the Apsarasas (' the maidens of the waters '), and special mention is made here of Citraratha, Vasuruci and Sūryavarcas in this connection. In post-Vedic literature their names are often found associated with various myths, and Citraratha is almost invariably described as the king of the Gandharvas in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The Gandharvas are believed to be the denizens of the air or atmospheric region, and the towns associated with their name, *Gandharva nagaras*, are supposed to have no real existence. This belief is found very early, for we find Patañjali referring to it while commenting on a *Vārttika* of Paṇini's Sūtra, *Striyām* (IV. 3).[1] But it has not prevented in any way the formation of concrete concepts about their physical forms in the minds of the Indians from early times. They are described in some comparatively late iconographic texts such as *Mānasāra*, *Mayasaṃgraha* (as quoted by Hemādri in his *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, Vratakhaṇḍa, Part I, p. 139), etc. *Mānasāra* in its section on Yakṣa-Vidyādharādilakṣaṇam describes the Gandharvas and Kinnaras together, but the verses are corrupt. The description given here seems to characterise both as having animal-like legs (really lower part of the body), the upper part being human in form with a face like that of Garuḍa; their arms are endowed with wings, (they wear) lotus crown and (have) colour of the shade of a flower; they are also associated with

[1] *Mahābhāṣya*, Kielhorn's Edition, Vol. II, p. 196; *Yathā Gandharvanagarāṇi dūrato dṛśyanta upaśṛtya ca nāpalabhyante.....*

sweet songs and musical instruments.[1] In Chapter VII of this book a distinction has been made between these two iconographic types, and Kinnarīs have been equated with horse-faced (Aśvamukhī) Yakṣiṇīs. But the *Mānasāra* does not seem to distinguish between the two. The *Mayasaṃgraha* does not at all refer to the hybrid form of the Gandharvas (Kinnaras are not described here), but gives a general idea about them in this way: 'The Gandharva, handsome in appearance, should be made as conferring boon on his devotees, wearing a crown and ear-ornaments, holding a club, and engaged in playing on a lyre'.[2]

The iconographic types of the Gandharvas, as preserved in Indian art from a very early period, conform partially to the description given in the *Mānasāra*. Some of the garland-bearers (*mālādhārīs*), shown hovering in the air round such symbolic representations of the Buddha as a *stūpa*, etc., in the early Buddhist monuments of Central India (Bharhut. Sanchi), are very often shown with bird-like lower parts, with wings attached to their arms, with a human head and torso. and adorned with crowns, ear-rings and other ornaments. The musical instrument is no doubt absent here, but it should be noted that their hands are shown holding garlands in these reliefs. Gandharvas, both male and female, however, are painted in the Ajanta frescoes with similar hybrid forms, but are shown playing on the *vīṇā* with their hands. This is also the way in which they are represented in early and late mediaeval relief compositions as accessories to the central figures of different cult-icons, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others. To heighten the emotional effect of such representations, they are often shown in pairs on the *prabhāvalī* of the cult image, the male playing on a musical instrument and the

[1] *Gītavīṇāvidhānaiśca Gandharvamiti kathyate|*
Caraṇaṃ paśusamānaṃ cordhvakāyaṃ tu narābham||
Vadanaṃ Garuḍabhāvaṃ bāhukau(ca) pakṣayuktau|
Makuṭaṃ kamalayuktaṃ puṣpasacchāyaṃ varṇam||
Paritaḥ karuṇavīṇaṃ Kinnarasya tu svarūpam|

These lines appear to be equally applicable to the Gandharvas and the Kinnaras; *Mānasāra* (Acharya), Ch. 58, p. 370.

[2] *Varado bhaktalokānāṃ kirīṭī kuṇḍalī gadī|*
Kāryassurūpī Gandharvo vīṇāvādyaratastathā||—as quoted by Hemādri *op. cit.*, Vratakhaṇḍa, Pt. I, p. 139.

female dancing to its tune. A Gandharva or Kinnara couple from Deogarh (Lalitpur sub-division, Jhansi district, Madhya Bharat) of the late Gupta period, illustrated here (Pl. XVI, Fig. 1), is of great interest in this connection. The pair stand facing each other on either side of a tall tree inside a beautifully designed arc of a medallion; their upper part is human with wings (the arms are not distinct, but the wings are), the legs below the knee are also human, the feet only being those of a bird; they have 'goggle eyes', like those of a Garuḍa as represented in early and late mediaeval art. Grünwedel's remark about the Gandharva-Kinnara type, which he considers to be a purely Indian one, should be quoted here: 'These secondary deities may have been originally represented in the costume of the aborigines of India. . . . .' It is based on the representation of a Kinnara couple in one of the reliefs on the coping stone of the Bharhut railing, illustrating the Kinnara Jātaka; the couple are 'so represented as to be seen only to the knees and who appear to be wearing leaves of trees round the body (*parṇa*: leaf and feather)'.[1] The Apsarasas did not appear to have had any peculiar iconographic trait of their own, inasmuch as they are usually shown in the forms of exceedingly beautiful damsels from the early period onwards. The Bharhut relief depicting the joy and merriment among the gods after Māra's defeat contains the dancing figures of the four Apsarasas described by the artist as: (1) Miśrakeśī, (2) Alambuṣā, (3) Subhadrā and (4) Padmāvatī (*cf.* Pl. II, Fig. 23). They appear as so many beautiful danseuse and very similar is the way in which they are represented in Indian art of later times. The river goddess, Gaṅgā and Yamunā, so frequently shown on the temple doors of the Gupta and the early mediaeval periods can justifiably be traced to these proto-types, though they are not depicted in the dancing pose. Their gracefully standing figures as

[1] Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 48, fig. 22. Though he has no doubt about the Indian character of the type, he thinks that the wings are of West Asian form, and the siren type of these secondary deities was a result of the admixture of primitive Indian and 'antique' forms.

architectural decorations (*cf.* the Besnagar Gaṅgā) are afterwards endowed with the hieratic form of cult deities (*cf.* the Isvaripur Gaṅgā) or exceedingly beautiful women of a voluptuous type (*cf.* the figure of Gaṅgā in the Rajshahi Museum; Pl. XVII, Fig. 3). The Besnagar Gaṅgā stands in a very graceful pose on the back of a Makara, a mythical crocodile, with legs crossed (? the *vidgala* pose as described in the *Viṣṇudharmottara*); her right elbow rests on the shoulder of an attendant, and a male figure on the left corner is striking a blow to the snout of the animal (this may be Bhagīratha goading it to move swiftly (Pl. XV, Fig. 4).

Before an account of the ' Devatās ', the Yakṣiṇīs and the iconographic types based on them are given, it is necessary to study an iconic type and its variants which appear to have been derived from the Yakṣa and Nāga types discussed above. Images of Gaṇapati, the god who became the principal object of worship of the Gāṇapatyas, one of the five recognised Brahmanical sects, appear to be basically connected with these two groups of folk divinities. A brief notice of the origin of the cult itself will be necessary before the iconic forms of the god and a few of the corresponding iconographic texts are considered at some length. It has been the opinion of many scholars that the cult of Gaṇapati was a comparatively late development. R. G. Bhandarkar is of opinion that as there is no mention of Gaṇapati and his worshippers in any of the Gupta inscriptions and as the description of the image of Gaṇapati in the chapter on Pratimālakṣaṇam of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* seems to be an interpolation, this elephant-headed and pot-bellied god came to be regularly worshipped after the late Gupta age. He, however, traces the beginnings of this worship to the veneration paid by many Indians to such ' imps and evil spirits ' as Śāla, Kaṭaṃkaṭa, Uṣmita, Kuṣmāṇḍarājaputra, Devayajana and others mentioned in the *Mānava Gṛhyasūtra* and the *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*.[1] They are collectively described

[1] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp. 148-50. He doubts whether all the six sub-sects of the Gāṇapatyas as described by Anantānandagiri in his *Saṃkaradigvijayakārya* actually existed at the time of

in these texts as well as in the *Mahābhārata* as Vināyakas who were prone to possess men and women, make them failures in life and put obstacles in their performance of good deeds; the texts also lay down various ways of propitiating these spirits and thus freeing oneself from their possession. It may be mentioned incidentally that the main characteristics of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka as the ' King of obstacles ' (Vighnarāja), the ' destroyer of obstacles ' (Vighna-vināśana) and the ' bestower of success ' (Siddhidātā) after proper propitiation can be traced to the traits of the ' imps and evil spirits ', the like of whom can even be found in the earlier *Gṛhyasūtras* (*cf. supra*, p. 73, f. n.),. In the *Yājñavalkya smṛti* (I. 271 ff.) one Vināyaka came to be described for the first time as the son of Ambikā, and this was the beginning of the very confused mythology about the origin of Gaṇapati to be found in later literature. T. A. G. Rao has collected a good many stories about this topic from several Purāṇas and Āgamas, in which the god is variously described as the son of Pārvatī alone, as the son of Śiva and Pārvatī, and even having an independent origin.[1] This shows the attempts of the later mythologists to bring this cult-god in line with the more important cult deities, Śiva and Śakti, of much earlier origin. It should be noted, however, that Gaṇapati's affiliation was at first sought mainly with those of the cult deities who had many primitive and un-Aryan traits in their composition; but in much later Purāṇas like the *Brahmavaivartta* Gaṇeśa is sometimes described as one of the aspects of Kṛṣṇa. The literal meaning of Gaṇapati is ' the leader of the Gaṇas ' who have almost invariably been associated with Śiva (the association of Rudra, the Vedic counterpart of Śiva, with Marutgaṇas should be noted in this connection). Śiva is sometimes described in the *Mahābhārata* as Gaṇeśvara, and this may also explain his ideological association with Gaṇapati.[2] The elephant-head of

Saṃkarācārya. But reliefs depicting the elephant-headed and pot-bellied divinity undoubtedly go back to the early Gupta age, if not still earlier.

[1] *Elements, etc.*, Vol. I, pp. 35-45.

[2] Gaṇeśvara is also one of the names of Viṣṇu among the one thousand names of the god (Viṣṇusahasranāma) given in Ch. 149 of the Anuśāsanaparva in

the latter may be explained by referring to the animal faces of the Mahāpāriṣadas of Rudra as described in the Skandābhiṣeka (ch. 45) chapter of the Śalyaparva of the Great Epic. These Pāriṣadas (Gaṇas) who are described in this context as so many attendants of Skanda bear the faces of various animals and birds such as tortoise, cock, crow, owl, parrot, falcon, dog, fox, boar, elephant, lion, etc. (vv. 76 ff.). The Śiva temple of Bhumara (c. 6th century A.D.) contained the figures of many Gaṇas with faces of various animals and birds on its walls. Another explanation of the characteristic iconography of Gaṇapati may be sought in the fact that he combined in him some of the characteristic traits of both the Yakṣas and the Nāgas. Coomaraswamy pointed out long ago that Gaṇeśa was undoubtedly a Yakṣa-type, and an elephant-headed Yakṣa is to be found in an Amaravati coping.[1] The *tundila* (pot-bellied) trait of the Yakṣas is prominent in Gaṇeśa and he possesses the head of a Nāga in the sense of an elephant (Nāga meant a snake as well as an elephant). The current idea about the association of this god of peculiar iconographic traits with wisdom seems to have been due to the confusion made between his name and that of the Vedic sage god Bṛhaspati or Brahmaṇaspati who is invoked also as Gaṇapati (*Gaṇānāṃ tvā Gaṇapatiṃ havāmahe*). That this confusion was comparatively late in its origin is borne out by the apocryphal character of the tradition about Gaṇeśa's having served as the amanuensis of Vyāsa when the latter was engaged in the task of composing the *Mahābhārata*. The veneration specially paid to him by traders and businessmen of Hindu India even in modern times can be traced to the early mediaeval period. The Ghatiyala (Jodhpur, Rajasthan Union) pillar contains four images of Gaṇapati facing four quarters as its capital piece, and the inscription engraved on it (V.S. 918-861 A.D.) informs us that it was erected by Kakkuka for the success of the business enterprise

the *Mahābhārata*. But there can be little doubt that some appellations of Śiva are also included in the *stotra*.

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Pt. I, p. 7.

of the local traders through the grace of this god. As the bestower of success he was not only highly venerated by the Hindus, but the Buddhists and Jains also seem to have held him in some respect. The appeal of this god with peculiar iconography even spread outside India, and his images of the mediaeval period have been found in Indo-China, Java and other places. In India itself the sect of the Gāṇapatyas came to have as many as six sub-divisions sometime before the time of Anantānandagiri, the biographer of Śaṃkarācārya. Those belonging to the subsects were the exclusive worshippers of the six different aspects of Gaṇapati, known as Mahā, Haridrā, Svarṇa, Santāna, Navanīta and Unmatta-Ucchiṣṭa. It is a fact, however, that his cult never became of such importance as some of the other major cults, but ' his worship without reference to any particular sect is practised even now by nearly all Hindus at the beginning of any religious ceremony and on special occasions ' (Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 150).

A careful and comparative study of the iconographic texts characterising various types of images of Gaṇeśa leaves little doubt that the earliest of them were either of standing or seated variety and endowed with two arms, the objects held by the hands being a hatchet (*paraśu*) and a radish (*mūlaka*); the elephant-head with only one tooth and the pot-belly are the features invariably present in both the early and late texts. Most of the texts, if not all, describing the general form of Gaṇapati collected by Gopinath Rao from various sources characterise him as four-armed, the only exception being that from the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* chapter (57) on Pratimālakṣaṇa. It has already been said that this couplet describing Gaṇapati is suspect, but there is little doubt that it describes the earliest variety of his image in this manner: ' The lord of the Pramathas (the same as the Gaṇas) should be elephant-faced, pot-bellied, holding a hatchet and a radish, and should have one tooth ' (*Pramathādhipo gajamukhaḥ pralambajaṭharaḥ kuṭhāradhārī syāt | Ekariṣāṇo bibhran-mūlakakandaṃ . . . . .*). This is no doubt the description of a two-armed image; there is no mention here, it is true,

of a pot of sweet-meat, but the ' radish ' or the bulbous root (*mūlakakanda*) which is mentioned here is the edible of an elephant. The peculiar trait of ' one tooth ' (*ekaviṣāṇa*) noted here gave rise to the later explanatory myth referred to by Rao (Vol. I, p. 51; Rao does not mention the name of the Purāṇa where it occurs). The couplet enumerating the various synonyms of Gaṇapati in the Svargavarga section of the *Amarakoṣa* also contains a reference to the one-tooth, elephant-head and pot-belly of the god (*Vināyaka-Vighnarāja-Dvaimātura-Gaṇādhipāḥ | Apyekadanta-Heramba-Lambodara-Gajānanāḥ*). The other texts like *Aṃśumadbhedāgama, Uttarakāmikāgama, Suprabhedāgama, Viṣṇudharmottara, Rūpamaṇḍana*, etc., invariably endow the god with four hands, the attributes held by them being any four among the following: ' own tooth ' (*svadanta*), wood-apple (*kapittha*), sweet-meat (*modaka*), elephant-goad (*aṅkuśa*), noose (*pāśa*), snake (*nāga*), rosary, lotus, etc. In these later texts, a mouse is very often described as his mount, and his consorts are sometimes mentioned as Bhāratī (another name of Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning), Śrī (Lakṣmī), Vighneśvarī, Buddhi and Kubuddhi. Other characteristic traits which can be gathered from these texts are: his three eyes, his slightly bent (*ābhaṅga*) or straight (*samabhaṅga*) pose when standing (*sthānaka*), tiger skin garment (*vyāghracarmāmbaradhara*), sacred thread made of a serpent (*vyālayajñopavītī*). Many are the iconographic varieties of the god described in the different texts under such names as Bīja-Gaṇapati, Bāla-Gaṇapati, Taruṇa-Gaṇapati, Vīra-Vighneśa, Śakti-Gaṇeśa, Lakṣmī-Gaṇeśa, Mahā-Gaṇeśa, Haridrā-Gaṇeśa, Unmatta-Vināyaka, Nṛtya-Gaṇapati, Ucchiṣṭa-Gaṇapati, Heramba-Gaṇapati, etc. Names of the cult pictures of some of the subdivisions of the Gāṇapatya sect can be recognised in this list, and some forms of the god like Śakti- or Unmatta-Ucchiṣṭa-Gaṇapati seem to be associated with the left-handed (Vāmācāra-Tāntric) variety of his worship. Only a few of the aforesaid forms are actually met with in the Gupta and post-Gupta mediaeval art, and they are thus of great interest in this connection.

A. K. Coomaraswamy has drawn our attention to one of the Gaṇa garland-bearers in a fragmentary relief from Amaravati (2nd century A.D.) now in the collection of the Madras Museum (*Yakṣas*, Part I, p. 42, Pl. 23, 1). This suggests Gaṇeśa, though the iconographic type has not developed here. In the red sandstone sculpture of Gaṇapati from Mathura (A. Getty, *Gaṇeśa*, Pl. 2, Fig. *a*) and the terracotta plaque from the Bhitargaon brick temple, both of the early Gupta period, we find that a great deal of development has taken place; but almost full hieratic form has been attained in the seated figure of the god in the Śiva temple of Bhumara (c. 6th century A.D.). The first of these sculptures shows the nude elephant-headed and pot-bellied god standing erect, and the way he is depicted does not seem to establish his divine nature. The same remark may also be made with regard to the Bhitargaon plaque, where the four-armed figure is shown in the attitude of a flying Gaṇa with his trunk touching a pot of sweetmeat placed in his front left hand; his front right hand is in the *tarjanī* pose, the objects in the other two hands being indistinct (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1908-09, pp. 10-11, fig. 2). But the Bhumara figure is shown seated on a raised seat with a chain of bells worn in the *upavītī* fashion and having bell-armlets, bell-bracelets and bell-anklets. The figure is two-armed, but the hands being broken, the attributes placed in them cannot be seen.[1] A relief showing Gaṇeśa with his consort seated on his left lap was also found at the same place; it looks like a caricature of the early Umā-Maheśvara reliefs (Getty, *op. cit.*, Pl. 3, Fig. *a*). Another early Gupta relief depicting a seated Gaṇapati is to be found in the facade of the Chandragupta cave at Udayagiri (Bhilsa, Madhya Bharat). The two-armed god is sitting on a raised seat in the *arddhaparyaṅka* pose, holding a cup containing sweetmeat (*modaka-bhāṇḍa*) in his left hand, to which his trunk (now broken) was applied; the god seems to be ithyphallic (Pl. XV, Fig. 1). In both these hieratic sculptures, the mouse is conspicuous by its

[1] R. D. Banerjee, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 16, Pl. XV, (*a*) & (*b*)

absence. Seated images of Gaṇapati of the early and late mediaeval periods have been found all over India, and it is no wonder that Indonesian sculptures very closely following these mediaeval Indian prototypes should also be found. The four-armed seated figure of the god reproduced here hailing from Java very closely follows the Indian tradition. The god is squatting on a double-petalled lotus seat, holding a rosary in his back right hand, the other three hands and the fore-part of the trunk being broken. The figure is carved with a great deal of skill, and the ornaments and the design of the garments, though not lavish, are yet very tastefully displayed (Pl. XV, Fig. 3). One of the finest standing types of Gaṇapati image is to be found at Khitching (Mayurbhanj District, Orissa), which belongs to the early mediaeval period. The four-armed god stands on a beautifully carved lotus in a slightly bent pose (*ābhaṅga*) having bell-necklets and a few other ornaments gracefully arranged over his different limbs, holding a rosary and his own tusk in the right hands, and a cup of sweetmeat (to which the fore-part of his trunk, now partly broken, is applied) and an indistinct object in his left ones, a snake serving as his sacred thread (*vyālayajñopavītī*). The well-arranged *jaṭā* with a miniature *kīrttimukha* in the centre on the top of the elephant-head, the rows of chain ornaments enclosing the protruding temples, the pose full of grace, and all such details demonstrate in a remarkable manner how such an apparently grotesque iconic type could be converted into an elegant piece of sculpture by the anonymous artist of a corner of Orissa. The cunning twinkle of the oblique eyes, again, seems to endow the elephant-face of the deity with uncanny intelligence; the creeping mouse can be recognised in the extreme right corner of the lotus pedestal (Frontispiece).[1] Another well-carved image of the god belonging to the same

[1] The Cham style standing Gaṇeśa from Mison, now in the Touraine Museum, of the 7th-8th century A.D., depicts him in a different way. He appears there in the role of a well-fed house-holder or a businessman. Rene Grousset remarks that the sculpture 'is directly inspired by Pallava India of the Tamil period'; *Civilisations of the East*, Vol. II, *India*, pp. 330-31, Fig. 162.

locality of Orissa depicts him dancing with vigour on a double-petalled lotus. This time the god is eight-armed (some of the hands are broken), the front right hand is in the *daṇḍa-* or *gaja-hasta* pose, the other three carrying his own tooth, a rosary (*akṣasūtra*) and an indistinct object, the front left hand holds a pot of *laḍḍukas* (a kind of sweetmeat) one of which is being lifted up by his trunk; the sacred thread made up of a long snake has its ends (the head and the tail of the snake) loose evidently due to the vigorous action of the dance. The artist has been eminently successful in emphasising the whirling motion by the pose of the two legs, the three or more bends (*atibhaṅga*) in the body and the disposition of the number of arms (Pl. XV, Fig. 2). A comparison of this type of Nṛtya-Gaṇapati may be made with such motifs of Bengal of the mediaeval times. The latter may be iconographically more elaborate, but many of them lack the easy grace and beauty of the former.[1] If we compare these naive forms of Gaṇapati with the late and developed renderings of such varieties as Śakti- or Lakṣmī-Gaṇeśa, Unmatta-Ucchiṣṭa and Heramba-Gaṇapati, etc., described and reproduced by T. A. G. Rao, we cannot but have a correct understanding of the process by which the hybrid iconographic type of pre-eminently a folk god was endowed with its much-embellished later hieratic forms.[2]

A brief account of the worship of Kārttikeya and his image-type will not be out of place here, for there is a close mythological association between this god and Gaṇapati in

[1] The Bengal Nṛtya-Gaṇapatis almost invariably depict him dancing beneath a hanging branch of mangoes in the top centre of the *prabhāvalī*, and its symbolism has been explained by the present writer in the *Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 448.

[2] *Elements, etc.*, Vol. I, Pls. XI-XIV and the corresponding descr ptions. In the Unmatta-Ucchiṣṭa Gaṇapati type the god and his consort are shown in a very intimate posture as detailed in the *Uttarakāmikāgama* extract quoted by Rao. The five-faced ten-armed figures of Heramba Gaṇapati seated on a lion (one such figure found at Rampal near Dacca has been described by Bhattasali in his *Catalogue*, pp. 146-47, Pl. LVI*b*) mostly follow the description of such a type given in such late works as *Śilparatna*. *Rūpamaṇḍana*, *Śāradātilaka Tantra*, etc. The Rampal image of Heramba-Gaṇapati has six miniature figures of Gaṇeśa on the top section of its *prabhāvalī*; these tiny figures evidently stand for the cult-icons of the six subdivisions of the Gāṇapatya sect noted above.

the Purāṇic texts. But there can be no doubt that the former, though no separate cult developed around him, entered the orthodox Hindu pantheon at a much earlier date than Gaṇapati. Patañjali's reference to the images of Skanda and Viśākha who, in another context, are regarded by the great grammarian as folk divinities (*laukika devatās*), has already been noted in the third chapter of this book (p. 85). In later coin legends, texts and lexicons, these two, along with many other names such as Brahmaṇya or Subrahmaṇya, Kumāra, Mahāsena, Guha, etc., were regarded as so many synonyms of this god. But if a careful analysis is made of the myths associated with many of these names, the fact that stands out prominent is this that there were many allied god-concepts that were at the root of the later unified idea of a deity by the name of Skanda-Kārttikeya. This hypothesis is borne out by the very confused account which is given in the two epics about the origin of the god, and, as in the case of Gaṇapati, his parentage has been differently accounted for in different contexts. His association with the hybrid-shaped and animal-headed Gaṇas or Pāriṣadas, said to have been lent to him as a favour by Śiva, in many texts described as his father, a close connection between some of his followers and those of Kubera, and lastly, a clear parallelism between him and the lord of the Guhyakas (*cf.* one of his names : Guha, and the *Agnipurāṇa* injunction quoted above that the shrines of the Yakṣa, *i.e.*, Kubera, and Guha, should be made in the northern sectors of the towns) leave little doubt about the folk-element greatly underlying his composition. His association with war was also fairly old, and this is explained by his being adopted as their spiritual as well as temporal ruler by the Yaudheyas, an ancient Indian military tribe living on their weapons (*āyudhajīvī kṣatriyas*).[1] In the *Bhagavadgītā* (Ch. 10) the Lord is made to say that he is Skanda among the warriors (*senānīnāmahaṃ Skandaḥ*). In debating the parentage of

[1] For this as well as many other points connected with this god, *cf.* Ch. IV, pp. 140-46 of this book.

Kārttikeya, the Great Epic refers to one tradition that identifies him with Sanatkumāra, the eldest born of Brahman (XII. 37, 12). This tradition can be traced to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* passage (VII. 26) where Sanatkumāra, the instructor of Nārada in Brahmavidyā, is described as the same as Skanda (*Bhagavān-Sanatkumārastaṃ Skanda ityācakṣate*). This epic tradition about Skanda's identity with Sanatkumāra, the great sage god, traceable to the *Chāndogya* was at the root of the development of another aspect of the latter, *viz.*, that of the ' instructor god ' well-known in south India.[1] Here also a parallelism between him and his brother Gaṇapati is to be marked. Skanda was also the god *par excellence* of thieves and robbers as is substantiated by the evidence of one of the early Sanskrit dramas, the *Mṛcchakaṭika* by Śūdraka. Many of these aspects, however, as in the case of the elephant-headed and pot-bellied divinity (Skanda is also sometimes described as ' goat-headed ', Chāgavaktra, when he is called Naigameya), appear also to have been transferred to him from the various traits of the great god Rudra-Śiva. Skanda-Kārttikeya's association with Sūrya has already been commented on in the third chapter of this book in course of the study of the Lala Bhagat column (pp. 105-06).

Skanda-Kārttikeya's worship was well in vogue in Northern India at a fairly early period, and one of the earliest references to the shrine of Svāmī Mahāsena, also described as Brahmaṇya-deva, is to be found in the Bilsad stone pillar inscription of the time of Kumāragupta I (415-16 A.D.). The much-mutilated Bihar stone pillar inscription of the time of Skandagupta contains a reference to the shrine of Bhadrāryyā and mentions Skanda and the Divine Mothers in that connection (*Bhadrāyyayā bhāti gṛham. . . . . Skanda-pradhānairbhuvi Mātṛbhiśca*).[2] Skanda is here

[1] One variety of the image of Kārttikeya or Subrahamaṇya there is known by the name of Deśika-Subrahmaṇya, in which form he is said to have taught *Praṇava* or the Vedic lore to his father Śiva. One of the earliest reliefs depicting the theme is to be found at Ellora ; *cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 350, pl. CV (the elaborate relief is carved in the Rameśvara cave shrine there).

[2] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, p. 49.

apparently in the role of the guardian of the Mothers, which position is often assigned to Gaṇapati and Vīrabhadra (an aspect of Śiva) in the mediaeval reliefs representing the Sapta-Mātṛkās. Worship of Skanda came to be completely merged in that of Śiva in Northern India of the post-Gupta period, and separate shrines were seldom dedicated to this deity. In Orissa, specially Bhuvanesvar which abounds in temples of Śiva, Kārttikeya with Pārvatī and Gaṇapati came to enjoy the position of so many Pārśvadevatās of Śiva, the three occupying the central positions in the western, northern and southern niches respectively of the main shrine. But in Southern India, though his mythological association with Śiva was never minimised, many separate shrines were erected in his honour by the Cholas and others, some of which are still standing.[1] Kārttikeya under his Sanskrit name Subrahmanya and his Tamil appellation Murugan, the divine child, is still being worshipped there with great devotion. In Bengal clay images (*kṣaṇika*) of Kārttikeya are worshipped only once in a year by Hindus seeking progeny and women of the town on the last day (*Saṃkrānti*) in the month of Kārttika (October-November).

One of the earliest iconographic texts describing Skanda is the verse in Chapter 57 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (v. 41) already quoted in Chapter IV (*supra*, p. 145). His main cognisance is a peacock (*barhiketu*), he holds a *śakti* (a sort of spear) and is boyish in appearance; evidently this type of his image is two-armed. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* text describes this god as Kumāra ' who is six-faced (*Ṣaṇmukha*), adorned with three- or five-lock arrangement of the hair (*śikhaṇḍaka*), dressed in red garment, riding on a noble peacock; his two right hands should hold a cock (*kukkuṭa*) and a bell (*ghaṇṭā*), and a ' victory flag ' (*vaijayantī patākā*) and a kind of spear or javelin (*śakti*) should be placed in his left hands '. The author further informs us that the three other forms of this god, known as Skanda, Viśākha and

[1] Reference may be made to such shrines at Tirupparankunram, Tiruvorriyur, etc

Guha, should be like Kumāra in all the details except in the matter of six faces and the peacock mount. The Purāṇic descriptions of the god and his variants follow more or less the same line. But numerous iconographic texts mostly from the south, which have been collected by Rao in the section on Pratimālakṣaṇāni under Subrahmaṇya-mūrti-bhedāḥ (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, App. B, pp. 205-28), leave little doubt about the popularity of the worship of this god among the southerners of the mediaeval times. The *Aṃśumad-bhedāgama* (canto 49) distinguishes as many as four varieties of Ṣaṇmukha, two-, four-, six- and twelve-armed.[2] The other south Indian texts like *Uttarakāmikāgama*, *Suprabhedāgama*, *Kumāratantra*, *Pūrvakāraṇāgama*, *Śrītattvanidhi*, etc., contain elaborate descriptions of different varieties of the images of the god, some of them giving such various names as Śaktidhara, Jñānaśakti-Subrahmaṇya, Skanda-Subrahmaṇya, Senāpati, Gajavāhana, Tārakāri, Senānī, Brahmaśāstā, Vallikalyāṇasundara, Bālasvāmī, Krauñcabhettā, and a host of others. It may be observed here that some of these varieties have been illustrated by Rao, and the bronze and stone sculptures illustrating them almost invariably hail from the south.

The earliest iconographic types of the god have been determined in the fourth chapter of this book with the help of the coins of both the indigenous and foreign rulers of different parts of Northern India. His characteristic emblems

[1] Book III, Ch. 71, Vv. 3-6. In the 7th verse we are told that four-souled eternal god Vāsudeva manifested himself as Kumāra (also four-formed) for leading the divine army ' (*Caturātmā hi bhagavān-Vāsudevaḥ sanātanaḥ! Prādurbhūta Kumārastu devasenānināyakaḥ*).

[2] Rao has not understood the sense of the line *Dvibhujaṃ vā caturhastaṃ ṣaḍbhujaṃ bhānuhastakam*. The variants of the next two lines, rejected by him and given in the foot note, constitute their correct reading, and they contain the names of the objects held by the 6 right and 6 left hands (one right hand is extended): *Śaktiṃ bāṇaṃ ca khaḍgaṃ ca cakraṃ pāśaṃ prasāritam| Sabye vāme tu picchaṃ ca khaṭakaṃ kukkuṭaṃ tathā| Dhanurdaṇḍaṃ halaṃ caiva bhānuhastānrite sthitam*. These attributes fairly represent those held by a many-armed Kārttikeya: spear, arrow, sword, wheel, dart, peacock-tail, shield, cock, bow, staff and plough-share. Of these, the characteristic emblems of the god are a spear and a cock. Bhānu is a synonym of Āditya, and the number of the Ādityas is 12, so the word *bhānuhastakaṃ* means ' twelve-armed '.

śakti, kukkuṭa and *śikhi* seem to have been associated with him from a very early period, though the cock was not actually placed in his hands and the peacock was not shown as his mount. In the coins of Kumāragupta I, we find the god riding a peacock, and a red sandstone relief of the Gupta period lately in the collection of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras (now in the Hindu University there) follows this mode of depicting the God to some extent. The god is seated astride on the back of his mount which with its tail outspread pecks at the fruit (probably *mātuluṅga*) at his right hand; the god holds a spear (*śakti*) in his left hand and the outspread tail of the peacock serves as his *prabhāvalī*. The sculpture keeps up the tradition of Gupta art remarkably well (Pl. XVI, Fig. 2). But many reliefs of the mediaeval period (8th-11th centuries A.D.) found in different parts of Eastern India usually depict the two-armed god in a standing pose with his mount shown by his side. The tenth century figure of Kārttikeya (it originally belonged to a Puri temple most probably Śaiva, for the relief is undoubtedly of a Pārśvadevatā; but it later found its way to a private collection in London) illustrated here (Pl. XVII, Fig. 1) is a typical example of such mediaeval images of Eastern India. The two-armed god stands in a slightly bent graceful pose (*dvibhaṅga*), his left hand placed on a cock (partly broken) which is held upwards by the female attendant on the god's left side, his broken right hand possibly held a spear; his mount, the peacock, with its head turned back strides to left. The god wears a number of ornaments tastefully displayed, and the hair-arrangement on his head stands for the *śikhaṇḍaka* or the *kākapakṣa* mode of hair-dressing. Though the figure shows slightly stiff and stereotyped features of the mediaeval sculptures, yet it possesses an innate beauty of its own.[1] If we compare this sculpture with the many south-

[1] This sculpture was published by Kramrisch in her article on 'Kaliṅga Temples' in *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. II (1934), pp. 42 ff., Pl. XIX, Fig. 2. She observes, 'As far as images are concerned at this stage, *śāstric* prescriptions and dark chlorite-stone make them sleek. Differentiation of plastic details and minutiae of jewellery and apparel . . . . . hem in a display of correctness. Still, in the figure of the peacock, the potency of the mass to some extent comes into its own' (p. 56).

Indian bronze and stone images illustrating the various aspects of Subrahmaṇya reproduced by Rao (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pls. CXXI-CXXIX), we cannot but be struck with the hieratic stiffness and heaviness of the latter, though a few of them, especially the earlier ones, are not devoid of some grace and beauty. The Aihole figure of Tārakāri Subrahmaṇya (Pl. CXXVIIIa), the Ellora Subrahmaṇya (Pl. CXXIV), the Tirupparankunram Devasenā-Kalyāṇasundaramūrti (Pl. CXXIX) and the Tiruvorriyur bronze group of Subrahmaṇya with Mahāvallī and Devasenā (Pl. CXXII) contain evidence of the south-Indian artists' skill in carving and bronze-casting. One of the left hands of the four-armed figure of the god in Ellora relief holds a cock, and it is attended on either side by two animal-headed human figures; the one on the right of the god is goat-headed and may stand for Naigameya (Chāgavaktra, an aspect of the god himself), the other on his left seems to bear the head of a donkey and may thus be a representative of the Skanda-Pāriṣadas. The Devasenā Kalyāṇasundara-mūrti representing the marriage of Subrahmaṇya with Devasenā is in evident imitation of the Kalyāṇasundara (known also as Vaivāhika, Śivavivāha, etc.) mūrtis of Śiva, as some of the Nṛtya-Gaṇapatis are inferior copies of some varieties of Nṛtyamūrtis of the great god. Devasenā occupies the place of Pārvatī, Indra replaces Viṣṇu as the giver of the bride, but Brahmā retains his office of the sacrificing priest, the bridegroom here being Subrahmaṇya. As Śiva is said to have a south-Indian princess Mināksī as one of his beloved consorts, so the south-Indian consort of Kārttikeya was Vallī or Mahāvallī who is sometimes shown keeping company with the god and his more orthodox consort, Devasenā, in some stone reliefs and bronze sculptures; such images can also be called Vallī-Kalyāṇasundaramūrti.

It will not be possible here to discuss the iconographic types of the other categories of the Vyantara-devatās, such as the Vidyādharas, Sādhyas, Siddhas, Asuras, etc., for with the exception of one or two groups among them, the rest have got very little individuality. One of the most indivi-

dualistic groups among them is that of the Vidyādharas, and their characteristic traits have already been described by me in Chapter VII of this book. The Kabandhas and Kumbhāṇḍas are also iconographically interesting, inasmuch as they portray chimera-like creatures of imagination. The former represent a class of beings whose eponymous hero known also by the name of Danu (son of Śrī) was severely punished by Indra, the Aryan god *par excellence*. According to the *Rāmāyaṇa* story (III. 69, 27 ff.), Indra smote him with his thunderbolt for insolence, and the demon's head and thighs were forced into his body which thus had only long arms and a huge mouth in his belly (*Kabandhā udare mukhāḥ*). In the art of Amaravati and Gandhāra, the Kabandhas are shown as having one head on their belly, but the original head and legs are also present. The Kumbhāṇḍas denote a class of demons or impish attendants of Rudra, who have testicles like pitchers (*kumbha-mushka*). Such figures are often found among the Mathura sculptures. One of these groups again, *e.g.*, the Garuḍas, will be studied in a subsequent chapter; they have clear mythological and ideological association with Viṣṇu and Sūrya.

A few words are necessary here to delineate the iconographic types of Devatās and Yakṣiṇīs which seem to have had a great hand in determining the early types of two of the most popular Hindu goddesses, Śrī-Lakṣmī and Puṣṭi-Sarasvatī. Many terracotta figurines of the Maurya and Suṅga periods have been found, some of which undoubtedly stand for the Yakṣinī type. One such beautiful terracotta originally found at Tamluk (Midnapore, Bengal) and now in the South Kensington Museum (London), depicts a Yakṣiṇī overloaded with ornaments; the ornamental use of some miniature weapons on her coiffure and of some tiny human figures on her thighs should be noted (Pl. XX, Fig. 3). The Bharhut artists are in this respect also of great help to us in the matter of identifying the different types of Devatās and Yakṣiṇis. The descriptive labels by the side of the individual reliefs name as many as five different kinds of such

beings: the Yakṣiṇīs are Caṃḍā (Candrā) and Sudasanā (Sudarśanā) and the Devatās are Culakokā (Kṣudrakokā), Mahākokā and Sirimā (Śrīmatī). It should be observed in this connection that there are many more female figures on the Bharhut railing, which may fall under one or other of these categories, but on account of the absence of any such accompanying labels we cannot distinguish all of them properly, though they are also endowed with individualistic traits. Candrā stands gracefully on a horse-faced *makara*, her right hand holding the branch of a tree, the trunk of which is entwined by her left hand. Sudarśanā also stands on a *makara* (Barua describes it as having wings, and the face of a rhinoceros), but no tree is by her side, and her raised right hand shows the *tarjanī mudrā*, the left hand being in the *kaṭihasta* pose. Kṣudrakokā stands exactly in the attitude of Candrā, but her mount is a very lively tusker which encircles the bottom of the tree with its trunk. Mahākokā is also in a similar standing pose, but she has no mount beneath her. We may refer here to only a few of the uninscribed reliefs of the 'Devatās' in the Bharhut railing. Barua has tentatively identified one goddess as Madhyamakokā. She is also shown in an attitude similar to the other two Kokā goddesses, but she stands gracefully on a well-caparisoned horse. The other relief shows a heavily jewelled standing figure of a goddess, her feet resting on the upraised hands of a malformed leaf-clad male figure (evidently standing for a Yakṣa); her upraised right hand holds a curious object, identified by Barua as the combined *śaṅkha-padma*—' a jewel in the form of a lotus-bud and conch-shell, provided with a stalk-like handle '. Barua tentatively identifies her as a Yakṣiṇī of Alakāmandā, the capital of Kubera; she may either stand for his queen or daughter. This suggestion may be correct, for the object in her right hand, if properly identified, symbolises two of the treasures (*nidhis*) associated with Kubera. The close association of Lakṣmī and Kubera with the treasures has already been pointed out by me in Chapters III and V of this book, and it will be presently shown how several types of the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī used

to be represented in the early Buddhist art of Central India.[1]

Śrī-Lakṣmī and Puṣṭi-Sarasvatī are the two goddesses who came to be respected by the Indians of all religious creeds. They are still held in high esteem by a large section of the people of India and special homage is paid to them on different *tithis* (lunar days) and *parvans* (days of religious ceremonies). The former is worshipped more often in the year than the latter whose clay image is worshipped in Bengal with great pomp and ceremony in the Śrī-Pañcamī day falling usually in the bright fortnight of January-February, every year. The principal idea underlying the conception of the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī is that of good fortune or luck which brings in blissful prosperity and abundance. The idea of radiant beauty came to be associated with her from the very beginning, and though she never had a cult of her own in the sense in which Viṣṇu, Śiva and others had, she came to be regarded in the epic and Purāṇic period as the Śakti of Vāsudeva Viṣṇu. A careful analysis of the literary and archaeological data connected with her origin and evolution leaves little doubt about the fact that folk elements played a great part in shaping her ideology and form, the concrete concept about her being only traceable from the late Vedic period onwards. In the earliest literature of the Indians, the *Ṛk* and other *Saṃhitās*, there is no mention of the goddess as such. Words like *śrī*, no doubt occur there, but they are used in a general way; for example, the passage *śriyase kaṃ bhānubhiḥ saṁ mimiskire* (*R.V.*; I. 87, 6) means '(the Maruts) wish to sprinkle rainwater with shining rays of the sun'. It must be observed, however, that in the early *Saṃhitā* texts, we find the names of other goddesses, more or less of an abstract character, which are reminiscent of the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī of later texts. The name Purandhi (regarded by many as the Vedic form of Avestan Parendi) occurs about nine times in the *Ṛgveda* in

[1] For the figures of the Devatās and the Yakṣiṇīs, *cf.* B. M. Barua, *Barhut*, Bk. II, pp. 70-74; Bk. III. Pls. XXIII (19), LIX (68), LXIII (72, 73), LXIV (74, 75), LXV (76, 78).

the sense of the goddess of plenty; Rākā (probably from the root *rā* to give) is mentioned there only twice as a rich and beautiful goddess. Sinivālī, another very interesting goddess (she is called Viṣṇu's wife in the *Atharvaveda*, VIII. 46, 3) is also mentioned twice in the *Ṛgveda*. In *Atharvaveda*, II. 32, 6 and 7, she is described as the sister of the gods, fair-armed, fair-fingered, prolific and mistress of the family (*viśpatnī*), and is invoked for granting offspring; in X. 184, she and Sarasvatī are asked to bear progeny. In the later Vedic texts, however, Rākā and Sinivālī are connected with different phases of the moon, the former being the presiding deity of the full moon night (*pūrṇimā*), and the latter, the same of the new moon night (*amāvasyā*). After a careful comparison of Śrī-Lakṣmī with these Vedic goddesses, it cannot be clearly established that any one of the latter could have served as the sole prototype of the former. In one of the *Brāhmaṇa* texts we find mention of the concrete concept of the goddess, and a curious story is narrated there about her origin. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that Prajāpati got tired in creating beings, and Śrī came forth from him while he was in this condition (this account reminds one of the birth of Pallas-Athene out of the aching head of Zeus as described in Greek mythological literature). Her beauty and resplendence made the gods envy her, and they wanted to kill her; but Prajāpati dissuaded them from this as she was a female, and asked them to take away all her attributes from her, sparing her life. 'Then Agni, Soma, Varuṇa, Mitra, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Savitṛ, Puṣan, Sarasvatī and Tvaṣṭṛ took from her food, kingdom, universal sovereignty, noble rank, power, holy lustre, dominion, wealth, prosperity and beautiful forms respectively. Then on Prajāpati's advice, she after offering ten sacrificial dishes to the ten divinities had every thing restored to her' (XI. 4, 1 ff.). The inner significance of this story is not difficult to understand, and the goddess embodies all the major good things coveted by man. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (I. 4) also emphasises this character of the goddess, and many more such texts can be cited, which do the same thing. The

Śrī-sūkta, evidently a late supplement (*khila*) of the *Ṛgveda*, characterises in its fifteen verses most of the distinctive features which she came to possess in her developed form; it is in the first of these verses that we find her being named Lakṣmī and described as ' a golden coloured antelope decorated with garlands of silver and gold ' (*Hiraṇyavarṇāṃ hariṇīṃ suvarṇarajata-srajām | Candrāṃ hiraṇmayīṃ Lakṣmīṃ jātavedo mamāvaha*). The epic literature further develops the concept of Śrī-Lakṣmī, and refers to her various traits in different contexts. One epic account about her origin, also much stressed in the Purāṇas, is that she was churned out of the ocean by the gods and demons along with such other things as the Uccaiśravas horse, wine, nectar, etc., and she fell to the share of the great god Viṣṇu. But her close association with Kubera is also emphasised in some passages of the *Mahābhārata*; in II. 10, 19, she is described as attending in the company of Nalakubera (sometimes described as Kubera's son) the court of Kubera, and in III. 168, 3, the Yakṣeśa is described as "united with Lakṣmī". In some later epic passages, she is expressly named as his consort, and the ideological union of the goddess of prosperity with the god of riches is easily understandable. Alakṣmī, her inauspicious opposite, also finds place in the epic, and in the 94th chapter of the Vanaparva of the *Mahābhārata* we are told that Lakṣmī came to the gods, and Alakṣmī to the Asuras, and the Asuras pervaded by Alakṣmī and struck by Kali (the evil age) were destroyed. The Buddhist texts also contain numerous references to the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī, in many of which she is described as *devakumārikā* and associated with the northern and southern quarters.[1] The auspicious dream dreamt by Triśalā, the mother of Mahāvīra, on the night she conceived the great Jina in her womb, was about this goddess ' wearing a garland of *dināras* (gold coins) on her breast and being bathed by two elephants '.

[1] Barua and Sinha, *Barhut Inscriptions*, p. 74.

Iconographic texts containing the descriptions of the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī, as collected by T. A. G. Rao, refer to her two-, four- and rarely many-armed varieties. But the two-armed variety is more common, and the attributes placed in her hands are usually two or four (if her image is four-armed) of the following: a lotus flower, a wood-apple (*śrīphala*, the fruit of the *bilva* tree, Agela Marmelos, L), conch-shell, a pot of nectar (*amṛtaghaṭa*) a citron (*mātuluṅga*), a shield (*kheṭaka*), a club (*kaumodakī*, the name of the club peculiar to Viṣṇu), etc. The *Viśvakarma-śāstra* describes the goddess Mahā-Lakṣmī localised at Kollāpura (Kolhapur in Western Deccan) as holding a pot and a club in her right hand, and a shield and a wood-apple in her left. The Caṇḍīkalpa, a supplementary text to the Devī-māhātmya of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* describes this developed form of her as having as many as eighteen arms, such objects as rosary, hatchet, club, arrow, thunderbolt, lotus, bow, small pitcher (*kuṇḍikā*), staff, spear, sword, shield (*carma*), lotus, bell and wine-cup being placed in her hands. But this form of the goddess really illustrates one of the primary aspects of the principal cult-icon of the Śāktas, which stands for the supreme fountain-head of all divine power.[1] Nearly all the texts expatiating on the iconography of Śrī-Lakṣmī describe her as well-dressed, decked with various ornaments, having such physical traits as fully developed breasts, a narrow waist and heavy buttocks. These features are indicative of radiant and healthy motherhood wherein lies the real beauty of a female body, and one comparatively late text names such a type as *Nyagrodha-parimaṇḍalā*.[2] It may be observed in this connection that the figures of the Yakṣiṇīs and Devatās of

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 337. Mahālakṣmī will be further discussed in Chapter XI of this book.

[2] *Hārāvalī* as quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma*. The verse reads—*Stanau sukaṭhinau yasyā nitambe ca viśālatā | Madhye kṣīṇā bhaved yā sā nyagrodha-parimaṇḍalā*. This is evidently the female counterpart of the ideally beautiful male type known as *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* which is described in much earlier texts. The ideal male type had among other features, very long arms (*ājānulambabāhu*) and wide chest (*vyuḍhoraska*).

early Buddhist art are characterised by these very traits. Some texts refer to the bathing of the goddess by the elephants; thus, the *Viṣṇudharmottara* says that a pair of elephants should be made behind her head upturning (the contents) of two jars (III. 82, 7; *Āvarjita-ghaṭaṃ kāryaṃ tatpṛṣṭhe kuñjaradvayam*). The text further informs us that the two elephants are to be known as the two *nidhis*, *śaṅkha* and *padma* (*Hastidvayaṃ vijānihī śaṅkhapadmāvubhau nidhī*; III. 82, 10).

The representation of Śrī-Lakṣmī in Indian art from the earliest known times onwards has followed several modes. The Bharhut artist describes one standing female figure of the *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalā* type carved on one of the uprights as Sirimā devatā. The goddess stands in the *samapādasthānaka* pose with her left hand hanging straight by her side and resting on her hip (*kaṭihasta*), while her right hand holds a flower (Pl. XVIII, Fig. 1). There is a great deal of iconographic affinity between her and the Devatās (Culakokā and others) described above, though the latter are depicted in a more lively pose. Other variants of this type shown in Sanchi, Bodh Gaya, etc., depict her almost in an identical pose, though she is shown sometimes standing in a lotus wood (*padma-vana*), holding a lotus in one of her hands (*padmakarā*), etc. The much-mutilated standing female figure found by Cunningham among the ruins of Besnagar along with the Banyan capital has been identified by me as representing the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī.[1] A female figure seated in a peculiar pose on the raised pericarp of a lotus flower carved on a section of a fragmentary coping stone from Amaravati (beginning of the 2nd century A.D.) can be identified as Śrī; lotus designs are all around the goddess, and the mythical *Makara* in front of her gazes at her with its wide open eyes (Pl. VIII, Fig. 6). The other characteristically developed iconographic type of the

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, 1941, pp. 141-46. In my article on 'Padminī Vidyā' there, I have quoted relevant texts from the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, which support my suggestion. It should be noted that concrete evidence of the existence of the Pāñcarātra or Bhāgavata cult has been found at Besnagar, and Śrī-Lakṣmī is intimately associated with it.

goddess so frequently represented in the early Buddhist art of Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodh Gaya, Amaravati and other places depicts her either standing or seated on a lotus usually coming out of a pot (*bhadra-ghaṭa*), holding a lotus in her hand, surrounded by blooming lotus flowers and spreading lotus leaves, and being bathed by two elephants. This ancient type and its variants, 'always reproduced with a certain evident pleasure' by the artists, came to stay, and it is still very popular among the Indians.[1] In many mediaeval temples, specially of Orissa, this motif often described as Gaja-Lakṣmī, was carved in the centre of the architrave over the doorway of the main structure, whatever might have been the cult affiliation of the shrines. Separate niches in mediaeval temples were also assigned to the goddess, where she was elaborately depicted. One such elaborate composition meets the eye of the visitor to the Kailāsa temple at Ellora, as soon as he enters the great rock-cut shrine. The goddess bathed by the elephants is seated on a lotus in a lotus pond, and there are other celestial attendants by her side. What is of unique interest in this beautifully carved gigantic relief is the presence of two Nāgas below the lotus-seat of the goddess; they, like the two Nāga chiefs, Nanda and Upānanda, of the Buddhist mythology connected with the Great Miracle of Śrāvasti, are supporting, as it were, the lotus on which the goddess is seated.[2] Another beautiful figure of Gaja-Lakṣmī of the mediaeval period is to be found at Khitching (Mayurbhanj, Orissa). The goddess is shown inside a decorated square frame seated gracefully in *lalitākṣepa* on a *viśvapadma*; there are the usual elephants bathing her with upturned jars; her right hand placed on the right knee is shown in the *varada* pose, the left hand

[1] Foucher recognised in these motifs in the early Buddhist monuments the figure of Māyā, the mother of the Buddha in the Nativity scene; but as it has already been shown (*supra*, pp. 110-11), Coomaraswamy's interpretation is more acceptable.

[2] For the mythology about the Śrāvastī Miracle and its illustrations in the Buddhist art of different periods, *cf.* Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, pp. 147-84, Pls. XIX-XXVIII (Pl. XXI, Fig. 2, is from China and Pl. XXII in from Boro-Budur, Java).

holding a full-blossomed lotus (Pl. XVIII. Fig. 2). It will be of interest here to take note of two stone and one bronze sculptures all in the collection of the Madras Museum. The stone ones hail from Kāveripakkam (North Arcot District, Madras), and the tiny bronze figure was unearthed from the village of Enadi (Arantangi Taluq, Tanjore District, Madras). The first of the two stone figures and the tiny bronze (Pl. XIX, Figs. 1 & 3) are really symbol-cum-image of the goddess Śrī; for the outline of the auspicious symbol described as *śrīvatsa* (for my remarks on it and its illustration, see *supra*, p. 190, and Pl. II, Figs. 11 & 12) can be distinctly recognised in them. In the former the bathing elephants, the lighted lamps (auspicious signs themselves) and the *śaṅkha-* and *padma-nidhis* can be faintly recognised; in both *channavīra* is shown across the breast, the curled ends of the symbol simulate arms and legs, and the head and the torso are clearly fitted in the general outline of the *śrīvatsa*. If we compare them with the third figure (Pl. XIX, Fig. 2) we can at once see how the symbol-cum-image has developed into a full-fledged image of Gaja-Lakṣmī with hands holding lotus and conch-shell (indicative of the two *nidhis*). She is seated in *paryaṅkāsana* (so called 'European fashion') on a raised lotus, is endowed with *kucabandha* (breast-band), *mekhalā* (jewelled waist-band) and other ornaments, with the usual elephants on either top corner. These two Kāveripakkam sculptures and the Tanjore bronze to be dated in the early mediaeval period demonstrate in a very interesting manner how close was the relation between the aniconic symbol and the icon itself, and how, in this case at least, the latter was supposed to evolve from the other.[1]

The Vedic aspect of Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning and music, has already been briefly noticed by me while discussing the evolution of the concept of Śrī-Lakṣmī and her worship. The topic has been fully dealt with by N. K.

[1] Sivaramamurti was the first scholar to note the importance of these interesting sculptures in a short article, 'Goddess Lakṣmī and her symbols' published long ago in *J.I.P.H.S.*, 1941. I am indebted to him for the photographs of these objects.

Bhattasali in his book, and I need only refer my readers to it.[1] The river Sarasvatī, on the banks of which Vedic lore and learning developed, seems to have played some part in the development of her concept, but there is no doubt that here also as in the case of her companion goddess, folk elements had much to contribute. In later mythologies she is sometimes connected with Brahmā (both as his daughter and his Śakti) and at other times with Viṣṇu as Puṣṭi, one of his Śaktis. Like Śrī-Lakṣmī she also was held in high veneration by the Buddhists and the Jains, and the latter assigned her a specially honoured place in the hierarchy as the head of the Śruta-devatās and the Vidyādevīs. In popular Hindu mythology she was given many names, the chief among which was Vāgdevī or the goddess of speech, who in the 10th maṇḍala of the *Ṛgveda* was assigned a unique position as the very embodiment of Śakti or the energic principle. As an independent goddess, when she is not shown as an accessory to Brahmā or Viṣṇu, she is usually described in such texts as *Viṣṇudharmottara*, *Aṃśumadbhedāgama*, *Pūrvakāraṇāgama*, *Rūpamaṇḍana*, etc., as four-armed, white-coloured, dressed in white garments and decked with many ornaments, holding in her four hands any four of the following objects: manuscript (*pustaka*), white lotus (*puṇḍarīka*), rosary, musical instrument (*vīṇā*), water-vessel (*kamaṇḍalu*), etc. There is no doubt about the fact that the musical instrument was one of the oldest emblems associated with her, though a manuscript was not also late in making its appearance.

The handsome figure carved on a railing pillar at Bharhut can be presumed to be an early prototype of the goddess. It is no doubt much mutilated, but enough still remains to give one an idea about its nature. The goddess stands in a graceful pose on what seems to be a lotus pedestal (this undoubtedly emphasises her divine nature) playing on

[1] *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, pp. 181-90. Here he discusses also the Purāṇic aspect of the goddess and rightly emphasises the confused character of the legends associated with her in the Purāṇas.

a harp with her two hands; the tastefully displayed ornaments on her body, the graceful bend in her right leg and the air of divine abstraction shown in her face—all these features endow her with a character not easily met with in such reliefs (Pl. XVII, Fig. 2). Barua rightly finds in it ' an early iconic form of the Hindu deity Sarasvatī (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 75). The descriptive label usually found in such reliefs at Bharhut is unfortunately wanting here. A sculpture much later in point of date (c. 10th century A.D.) hailing from Khitching (Mayurbhanj, Orissa) can be studied along with this Bharhut relief. It shows the half-length figure of a seven-hooded Nāginī playing on an Indian *vīṇā*; she is beautifully decorated with ornaments and is wearing a *karaṇḍamukuṭa* (usually worn by goddesses). The number of the hoods behind her head and the type of headdress worn by her distinctly prove that she is not an ordinary snake-maiden, but is a goddess with iconographic affinity to Sarasvatī (Pl. XX, Fig. 2). One of the earliest figures of the goddess Sarasvatī with a manuscript as her emblem was unearthed from the Kaṅkāli Ṭilā, Mathura. She ' is shown sitting squatted, with her knees up, on a rectangular pedestal, holding a manuscript in her left hand. The right hand, which was raised, has been lost. The figure is clothed in very stiffly executed drapery, a small attendant with hair dressed in rolls stands on each side. The attendant on the left wears a tunic and holds a jar—the attendant on the right has his hands clasped in adoration.' The pedestal bears a six-line inscription in the Brāhmī script of the Kushan period; it records the installation of the image of Sarasvatī, the gift of the Smith Gova, son of Siha at the instance of the preacher Āryya-Deva in the year 54 (or 44 as suggested by Smith).[1] The sculpture thus can be dated in the first half of the 2nd century A.D. (either 132 or 122 A.D.), and

[1] V. A. Smith, *The Jaina Stūpa and Other Antiquities of Mathura*, pp. 56-7, Pl. XCIX. The head with the halo as well as the upper part of the raised right hand, is lost; but other details of the inscription seem to prove that the figure represents the Jaina version of the goddess. The sculpture was found in Kaṅkāli Ṭilā, Mathura, in 1890, ' near the first or eastern temple in the mound, which seems to have belonged to the Śvētāmbara sect '.

be regarded as one of the earliest representations of Sarasvatī, though most probably in its Jaina setting. The pitcher in the hand of one of the attendants may symbolise the receptacle of knowledge (*jñānabhāṇḍa*) of which she was the presiding deity. In the Bharhut and Khitching figures the folk element remains supreme; but even in this developed hieratic form from Mathura the primitive folk character is clearly discernible in the general outline of the body (*nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalā*), the sitting posture and the arrangement of the drapery. It will be of interest now to compare with these early prototypes one or two of the fully developed iconographic representations of the goddess of a much later date. The two-armed goddess seated erect in the *vīrāsana* pose is from the Bṛhadīśvara Temple, Tanjore; her right hand is broken, her left hand holding a manuscript is placed on her left thigh; *chauri*-bearing attendants are on her either side. She wears a tall *mukuṭa* with a canopied projection, wears jewellery, and has a tree over the canopy; flying Vidyādharas are on her either side at the top, and there are bearded ṛiṣis (sages) and other attendant figures in rows on the side niches (Pl. XX, Fig. 5). The tree above her seems to signify the idea of *jñāna* as the Bodhi-tree in the Vajrāsana Buddha figures indicates. The whole composition is endowed with sedate and tranquil calm, the resultant of true knowledge, so beautifully expressed in the latter; the sculpture is of the early Chola period. Another beautiful figure of Sarasvatī, now in the collection of Dacca Museum (3B ia), shows the four-armed goddess seated in *lalitākṣepa* on a double-petalled lotus, playing on a *vīṇā* with her two front hands and holding a rosary and a manuscript in her back right and left hands respectively. A tiny swan (*haṃsa*, the usual vehicle of the goddess in these mediaeval sculptures) is carved in the extreme left corner of the pedestal which is decorated with lotus coils usually found in these 11th or 12th century sculptures. The *kīrttimukha* in the centre of the tapering top of the *prabhāvalī*, the flying Vidyādharas, the trefoil arch over the head of the goddess, the female *chaurī*-bearers on her either side, the *pañcaratha* pedestal, the figure

of the donor with folded hands in the extreme right corner,—all these features typify the sculpture as one of the fully developed hieratic forms of Sarasvatī. The sculpture was found in the village of Vajrayoginī, near Dacca, and seems to have been associated with the original home of Atīśa Dipaṅkara who went to Tibet from the Vikramaśīlā monastery in 1040 A.D.[1]

It will be of interest in the concluding section of this chapter to refer briefly to the worship and iconography of a few of the folk goddesses of ancient and mediaeval India. Some of them or their modern counterparts are still venerated by many Hindus, especially those with primitive cultural elements persisting among them, mostly in times of natural and physical calamities and ailments affecting them. The epic story of Jarāsandha, the Magadhan king, one of the enemies of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍava brothers is well known, but the character of the ogress Jarā who was responsible for bringing back the discarded halves of the newborn babe (the word *Jarā-sandha* literally means ' united by Jarā ') to life may not be so. She describes herself to Bṛhadratha, the father of Jarāsandha, as ' the Rākṣasī Jarā with power to assume different forms (*kāmarūpiṇī*) who is worshipped not only in the royal household itself, but also venerated by the people in general; her name is Gṛhadevī (' the goddess of the household ') and her youthful figure surrounded by her children is painted on the palace walls; whoever draws her figure in this manner on the walls of his house, is blessed with plenty, he who does not do so is cursed with scarcity ' (*Mahābhārata*, II. 18, 1-6). This summary account reminds one of the Yakṣiṇī Hārītī of the Buddhist texts, myths connected with whom and similar types of secondary divinities being recorded in the *Vinayapiṭaka* of the Sarvāstivāda school, the *Mahāvastu*, the *Saṃyuktaratnasūtra* of the Chinese *Sūtrapiṭaka*, etc. The story of the ogress as preserved in the first of these texts (mainly preserved in its Chinese translation) has clear affinities with the epic account of Jarā. In it Yakṣiṇī Hu-anh-si meaning

[1] N. K. Bhattasali, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-90, pl. LXIII.

' Joy ' (' perhaps based on such Sanskrit name as Nandā or Nandinī '—Watters) was the tutelary deity of the people of Magadha. On account of an unholy wish expressed by her in one of her previous births, she indulged in the practice of robbing the people of Rājagṛha of their children and feeding herself and her 500 sons on them. The local people gave her the name of Hārītī (literally, ' one who steals ') and resorted to Buddha in their distress. Buddha taught her a lesson by hiding the youngest of her sons, and when she enquired from the Master as to the means of subsistence of herself and her children, he ordained that in all monasteries and in the houses of all right-minded people, her figure and the figures of her children are to be carved or painted and eatables offered to them. There is little doubt about the ideological affinity between Hārītī and Jarā, and the popularity of the cult of the former both in and outside India is fully vouchsafed by literary and archaeological data. Hiuen Tsang tells us about her worship in ancient Gandhāra, and refers to the Hārītī Stūpa said to have been erected by Aśoka (identified by Foucher with Sāre-Mākhe-ḍheri in the Peshawar District). Her worship migrated to China, Korea and Japan, though in a somewhat modified form. In China, the deity Kwan-yin, Avalokiteśvara in female aspect, absorbed this Indian folk goddess while in Japan she came to possess both the forms of a saint and an ogress (really an ogress turned into a saint). In the latter country she is named Kishi-mo-jin in her character as an ogress, and Koyasu Kwan-non in that of a saint or a divinity, in both of which she is accompanied by her children. The cult of Hārītī was very popular in the extreme north and north-west of India; numerous sculptures sometimes depicting her singly along with her children, or at other times in the company of her consort Kubera (known also as Pañcika) and her playing children, have been discovered in course of excavations by the Indian Archaeological Department. Some mediaeval reliefs of Hārītī have also been found in Bengal and other places.

Reference may now be made to Jyeṣṭhā whose worship was once very popular in Southern India. One of the Āḻvārs (Tāmil Vaiṣṇava saints), Toṇḍaradippoḍi (Sanskrit Bhaktāṅghṛireṇu, *i.e.*, ' the dust of the Bhaktas' feet ') by name, complained in his songs about the foolishness of the common people who worshipped such goddesses of lowly origin for happiness and prosperity, when they could easily obtain supreme bliss by praying to Lord Viṣṇu. To a devout Viṣṇubhakta this mental attitude of the mass might appear as strange and erratic, but undeveloped human mind is very prone to believe in the practical utility of such worship. The force behind this belief was at the same time so strong that the higher section of the people could not but succumb to it at times. The *Bodhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* devotes an entire chapter to the cult of this goddess who is variously described there as Jyeṣṭhā, Kapila-patnī, Kumbhī, Jyāyā, Hastimukhā, Vighnapārṣadā, Nirṛti, as ' having lions attached to her chariot and tigers following her ' (*Bodhāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, edited by Shama Sastri, pp. 294-96). The *Liṅgapurāṇa* account about the origin of Jyeṣṭhā is very interesting. When this inauspicious goddess came out of the ocean being churned by the Devas and the Asuras for the second time, she was married to the sage Dussaha. He soon found out that she was loath to hear the praises of and prayers to the gods Viṣṇu and Śiva, and was averse to encourage a good deed. The poor sage was advised by Mārkaṇḍeya to humour his wife's inclinations and take her to such places where all sorts of evil and inauspicious things were being done (the shrines where Bauddha and non-Vedic forms of worship were performed are included among them). Dussaha, however, freed himself from the company of his wife by a ruse, and advised her to sustain herself till his return, by the oblations offered to her by good women. He never came back to her, and Viṣṇu being asked by the poor lonely wife about the way she would maintain herself counselled her to visit those people who were his exclusive worshippers and who did not pay homage to Śiva and other gods. Viṣṇu muttered the Rudra-mantra to

protect himself from the baneful influence of Jyeṣṭhā also known as Alakṣmī. It is sometimes especially enjoined that Viṣṇubhaktas and women should offer her oblations. This popular myth evidently concocted with a deep sectarian bias unwittingly hints at the manner of introduction of such goddess cults among the orthodox sectaries. The mode of her sustenance as suggested by her husband reminds us of that of Jarā and Hāritī.

Some iconographic texts delineating the features of Jyeṣṭhā have been collected by Gopinath Rao from *Aṃśumadbhedāgama, Suprabhedāgama, Viṣṇudharmottara, Pūrvakāraṇāgama,* etc. They lay down that she is two-armed, long-nosed, with sagging lips, long and pendulous breasts and belly ; she holds a lotus in her right hand, the left hand resting on the seat ; she is crow-bannered (*kākadhvajasamāyuktā*), accompanied by her children (*kanyāputrānvitā*) ; her son has the face of a bull ; in one variant of the *Suprabhedāgama* text she is described as ' Kali's wife riding on a donkey (*Kharārūḍhā Kaleḥ patnī*). Rao has illustrated a few mediaeval reliefs of Jyeṣṭhā, which correspond to a great extent with her textual descriptions.

Rao tells us that the worship of this goddess is practically obsolete now in Southern India. But the ground lost by Jyeṣṭhā in her homeland was gained by her under another name, Śītalā, in eastern and western parts of India—Bengal, Orissa, Gujrat, etc. Śītalā worshipped in these parts as the goddess of small-pox has a great many affinities with the Buddhist Hārītī, especially from the point of view of her iconographic and other traits. Some of the various names given to Jyeṣṭhā in the old Tamil Nighaṇṭus are Mugaḍi, Tauvai, Kālāḍi, Mudevī, the crow-bannered, the ass-rider, etc., and her weapon is said to be the sweeping broom. The well-known Praṇāma mantra of Śītalā (quoted in page 25 of this book) contains a few notable characteristics of Jyeṣṭhā ; Śītalā rides on a donkey, has such emblems as a sweeping broom and a pitcher, and is adorned with a winnowing fan on her head. The inauspicious Jyeṣṭhā may also be partially recognised in the *kṣaṇika* (temporary)

image (only in crude outline) of Alakṣmī made of cowdung which is worshipped in the Dipānvitā Lakṣmī-pūjā night (the same as the new-moon night after the Dussera) and then taken outside the house with the beating of winnowing fans and discarded. This ritual is very much in vogue in several districts of Bengal.[1]

[1] For a detailed discussion of the worship of Jarā, Jyeṣṭhā and others, see my article on 'Some Folk Goddesses of Ancient and Mediaeval India' in *IHQ*, XIV, 1938, pp. 101-09. For details about the iconography of Jyeṣṭhā, *cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 393-400. Ṣaṣṭhī, sometimes called Skandamātā, is also worshipped by Bengali women with progeny and wishing progeny.

CHAPTER X

Cult Icons

Visnu and Surya

Visnu

One of the most important of the Brahmanical cults that came into being some centuries before the beginning of the Christian era centered round Viṣṇu, but this god was not identical with the Vedic Viṣṇu. The latter, though not one of the major gods in the *Ṛgveda*, was of some importance there. The feat associated with him in the *Ṛk* and the other Vedas is that of his having traversed the whole of the universe with three strides (*R.V.*, 122; *A.V.*, VII. 26, 4). He is endowed in these texts with such attributive epithets as *urukrama*, *urugāya* ('he of the great strides'), *trivikrama* ('he of the three strides') etc. Sākapuni, one of the ancient Vedic commentators, interprets the three steps as the course of the solar deity through the three divisions of the universe, the god being manifest in a threefold form, as Agni on earth, Indra or Vāyu in the atmosphere and Sūrya in the sky. Aurṇabhāva, another old interpreter of the Vedas, however, is of opinion that the three strides relate to the apparent progress of the sun through the firmament. These 'three steps' in course of time developed into the myth relating to the dwarf incarnation of the Purāṇic Viṣṇu (the fifth one, Vāmanāvatāra, in the stereotyped list of the Daśāvatāras). The idea of motion, swift far-extending regular motion, is constantly associated with Viṣṇu in the Vedas; but the special character of the Purāṇic god as the preserver and benevolent deliverer is also outlined there. His gradual rise to importance in the late Vedic period, however, was primarily due to his having been identified with sacrifice. The

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (XIV. 1, 1) records a myth in which Viṣṇu was identified with Sacrifice, for he became the most eminent among the gods by first comprehending its nature. Still there is no doubt about the fact that even in the period of the Brāhmaṇas he did not appear as the central figure in a cult pre-eminently theistic in character, which would require the making of his images.

In the epic and Purāṇic age Viṣṇu is regarded as the most influential member of the later Brahmanical triad, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva,—the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer. But this Viṣṇu, round whom one of the major Brahmanical cults grew up, was really a result of the syncretism of three god-concepts,—the man-god Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, the Vedic sun-god Viṣṇu and the cosmic god Nārāyaṇa of the Brāhmaṇas. Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, the Sātvata hero, was really at the root of the Bhakti cult that came to be designated as Vaiṣṇava at a comparatively late stage in its growth, its earlier names being Ekāntika, Bhāgavata, Pāñcarātra, Sātvata, etc. This Kṣatriya chief with some of his relations, Saṃkarṣaṇa (his elder brother), Pradyumna (his eldest son by Rukmiṇī), Śamba (his son by Jāmbavatī) and Aniruddha (Pradyumna's son) came to be deified by his followers and admirers. In the cult that grew around him, he and his relations were at first assigned the position of the hero-gods, the holy Pañcavīras of the Vṛṣṇi clan (*cf.* the Mora Well inscription and the *Vāyupurāṇa* passage already noted in Chapter III); but shortly afterwards, Śāmba was eliminated from this list of deified heroes by the theologians of the cult, and the remaining four (Vāsudeva as the fountain-head, the three others being his successive emanatory forms) were regarded as typifying the different aspects of the one great god Para Vāsudeva. The systematisers of the cult-tenets did not take much time in transforming the Vīra concept about the central deity and some of his relations into the Vyūha or 'emanation' concept; to this was added the Vibhava or 'incarnation' concept of the principal cult-god Vāsudeva identified with Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa sometime before the beginning of the Christian

era. According to the re-orientated ideology of the cult, the one god Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa could be conceived in his fivefold aspects or forms; these were 'Para'—the highest, 'Vyūha'—the emanatory, 'Vibhava'—the incarnatory, 'Antaryāmin'—the inner controller of all beings, and 'Arccā'—the images (named as Vigrahas or the 'very bodies') of the god. It is with the last aspect of the god that the students of iconography are directly concerned; this aspect really illustrates the first three, 'Para', 'Vyūha' and 'Vibhava', forms of the Lord. The fourth or 'Antaryāmin' aspect does not fall within the purview of the iconographer, for the god as such 'resides in the heart of all and regulates their actions'.[1]

'Para' stands for the highest aspect of the god, the supreme cause and the final resting place of everything. His divine will (*icchā*) is projected towards his consort Śrī-Lakṣmī who in her dual aspects of 'matter' and 'action' (*bhūti* and *kriyā*) receives it, and due to the close combination of these three powers (*Icchāśakti*, *Bhūtiśakti* and the *Kriyāśakti*) six ideal *Guṇas* (attributes) are brought into being. They are *Jñāna* ('knowledge'), *Aiśvarya* ('lordship') *Śakti* (ability, potency'), *Bala* ('strength'), *Vīrya* ('virility') and *Tejas* ('splendour'). 'They are separated into two sets, 1 to 3 forming one, and 4 to 6 forming the other, and the corresponding *Guṇas* of each set (1 and 4, 2 and 5, 3 and 6) join to form a pair connected with some special divine manifestation'. The totality of all the six *Guṇas* along with the three pairs resorts to and makes up the subtle bodies of Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, which are called the four Vyūhas (the Caturvyūhas or the Caturmūrtis). But the Pāñcarātrins speak of a chain of emanations,—Saṃkarṣaṇa the possessor of *Jñāna* and *Bala*, emanating from Vāsudeva in whom all the six *Guṇas* are manifest, Pradyumna having *Aiśvarya* and *Vīrya* from Saṃkarṣaṇa, and Aniruddha with *Śakti* and *Tejas* from Pradyumna. The concept of the Caturvyūhas seems to have been first formulated in the second century B.C., for Patañjali seems to refer to

[1] *Bhagavadgītā*, XVIII, 61: *Iśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ hṛddeśe'rjjuna tiṣṭhati Bhrāmayan sarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā ||*

it.[1] The number of the Vyūhas was later increased to twenty-four (Caturviṃśatimūrtis) in the Gupta period or a little later by the Pāñcarātra theologians, in an esoteric manner, and twenty of the most auspicious names of the principal cult-god (he had been endowed with as many as 108 or even 1000 names in different contexts) were regarded as the names of these added Vyūhas. It may be mentioned here that the separate iconic representations of these 24 Vyūhas or Mūrtis of Viṣṇu (in the developed phase of the cult the central deity was named thus, from whom the name of the cult became Vaiṣṇava) in the early and late mediaeval periods are very difficult to distinguish from one another; they are almost identical, the subtle distinction only lying in the different ways of placing the four emblems of the four-armed god—*śaṅkha, cakra, gadā* and *padma*.[2]

The doctrine of the Vibhavas (Avatāras, *i.e.*, incarnatory forms), was no less a component part of the Pāñcarātra or the Bhāgavata creed than that of the Vyūhas. The difference between the two lies in the fact that we have some evidence regarding the existence of the former in the later Vedic texts, whereas there is none about the existence of the latter in them. The term *avatāra* is applied to the act of the god coming down in the form of a man or an animal to the earth and living there in that form till the purpose for which he had descended in the universe was fulfilled; it also sometimes denotes the assumption of different forms by the god for the attainment of particular objects. It is thus distinct from identification (where one deity is identified with another), or emanation (as illustrated by the Vyūha doctrine).

[1] *Mahābhāṣya* (comment on P. VI, 3, 5); *Janārdanastvātma caturtha eva*. The discovery of the 1st or 2nd century B.C. *dhvajas* of three of the Vyūhas, Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna, at Besnagar supports this statement; they are Garuḍadhvaja, Tāladhvaja and Mīna (or Makara) dhvaja (cf. Ch. III, pp. 103-05; another Tāladhvaja found at Pawaya is illustrated in Pl. XXVII, Fig. 3).

[2] Besides the 4 primary Vyūhas, the names of the 20 secondary ones are :—Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Trivikrama, Vāmana, Śrīdhara, Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha, Dāmodara, Puruṣottama, Adhokṣaja, Nṛsiṃha, Acyuta, Janārddana, Upendra, Hari and Kṛṣṇa (*Rūpamaṇḍana;* the *Padmapurāṇa* list quoted by Rao has 21 names including those of the primary Vyūhas and omits the last three names but Kṛṣṇa).

It is also different from the 'possession' of one individual entity by the divinity, in which the latter takes up temporary abode in the former; but this idea of 'possession', as will be shown later, has to some extent been manifest in the story of the Paraśurāma incarnation of Viṣṇu. In the Pāñcarātra theology, the Vibhavas (*vi-bhū-al, i.e.*, 'the act of becoming in a special manner') belong to Pure Creation (*śuddhasṛṣṭi*) to which the Vyūhas also belong; these incarnations, however, may not only be of the composite god Viṣṇu himself, but also may be of his Vyūhas, sub-Vyūhas and Pārṣadas (companions), or even of his attributes or emblems. One of the earliest references to the assumption of some forms by the divinity for the attainment of particular ends is to be found in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* where Prajāpati is said to have assumed Fish (Matsya), Tortoise (Kūrma) and Boar (Varāha) forms on different occasions for the furtherance of creation and the well-being of the created. When the doctrine of incarnations in its association with Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa was well established, all these three were bodily transferred to that composite god, and were regarded as some of his celestial (*divya*) incarnations. The Indian ideology about the Avatāras of the Divine Being is, however, briefly but clearly expounded (specially with reference to the god's human incarnations) in two verses of the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*.[1] This work is regarded by R. G. Bhandarkar as one of the earliest to contain expositions of some of the tenets of the Ekāntika school, though the Vyūhavāda, one of the most important doctrines of the Pāñcarātra school, is conspicuous by its absence there.

The *Bhagavadgītā* passage just mentioned explains the ideology underlying the Avatāravāda in the Hindu thought in the clearest possible manner. It does not rightly specify the number of the Divine Incarnations, for the god 'creates himself age after age as the conditions in the universe

[1] *Bhagavadgītā*, IV, 7-8: *Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati Bhārata* | *Abhyutthānamadharmasya tadātmānaṃ sṛjāmyaham* || *Paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṃ vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām* | *Dharmasaṃsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge* ||

demand'. Some later texts, many among them of the Pāñcarātra school, have been at pains to fix the number of the Avatāras, which gradually came to be stereotyped as 'ten' (Daśāvatāras). A brief reference to a few of the epic, Purāṇic and Pāñcarātra passages enumerating the various incarnations will be useful for our understanding of many Vaiṣṇava images. If we study them together, we shall not only recognise in some of these enumerations all the stereotyped ten (this list also sometimes varies in the north and south of India) whose icons are common, but also find the names of many Avatāras whose images, though not so common, are also known. The Nārāyaṇīya section of the *Mahābhārata* refers in one list (XII, 349, 37) to the Varāha, the Vāmana, the Narasiṃha and the 'Man' incarnations. The human incarnations refer, no doubt, to Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, Bhārgava Rāma and Dāśarathi Rāma, for in Chapter 389 (verses 77-90) of the same section not only the stories about the first three in the list given above are briefly narrated, but also those about his incarnations as Bhārgava Rāma (Paraśurāma), Dāśarathi Rāma and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa are recounted. But a fuller list of the incarnations is given in verse 104 of the same chapter, which contains the names of Haṃsa, Kūrma, Matsya, Varāha, Narasiṃha, Vāmana, Rāma (Bhārgava), Rāma (Dāśarathi), Sātvata (Vāsudeva or Baladeva, for both of them are of the Sātvata race) and Kalkin. The number ten is to be noted here, and the absence of Buddha in this list may show that Buddha had not as yet been regarded as an Avatāra. In the *Vāyupurāṇa* (Chapter 98, verses 71ff.) mention is made of ten incarnations of Viṣṇu, of which the first three, Yajña, Narasiṃha and Vāmana, are celestial, the rest being his human incarnations; they are Dattātreya, one unnamed in the Tretāyuga simply called the Fifth, Jāmadagnya Rāma, Dāśarathi Rāma, Vedavyāsa, Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, and Kalkin, the future incarnation. Here also Buddha is conspicuous by his absence, and a few other constituents of the stereotyped list of ten, Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha, are replaced by Yajña, Dattātreya and Vedavyāsa. The *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* enumerates the Avatāras thrice; in the first recounting

(I. 3, 6-22), the number is 22, in the second (II. 7, 1ff.), 23, and in the third (XI. 4, 3ff.), 16. The first list contains the names of (1) Puruṣa, (2) Varāha, (3) Nārada, (4) Nara and Nārāyaṇa (together), (5) Kapila, (6) Dattātreya, (7) Yajña, (8) Ṛṣabha, (9) Pṛthu, (10) Matsya, (11) Kūrma, (12) Dhanvantari, (13) Mohinī, (14) Narasiṃha, (15) Vāmana, (16) Bhārgava Rāma, (17) Vedavyāsa, (18) Dāśarathi Rāma, (19) Balarāma, (20) Kṛṣṇa, (21) Buddha and (22) Kalkin. This enumeration contains the names of all the usual ten in the stereotyped list, but the Purāṇakāra does not fail to emphasise that 'the divine descents are innumerable' (*Avatārāḥ hyasaṃkhyeyāḥ*). The difference of this list from the other two is immaterial, the last omitting some included in the first; but none of them omits Ṛṣabha (Ādinātha or Ṛṣabhanātha, the first Tīrthaṃkara of the Jainas) and Buddha. The *Varāha* and *Agnipurāṇas* contain the stereotyped list of ten incarnations, while the *Matsyapurāṇa* (Ch. 47 V. 46) lays down that Viṣṇu was born seven times among men because he was cursed by Bhṛgu for killing his wife, the mother of Śukra. These seven are (1) Dattātreya, (2) Māndhātā, (3) Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma of the race of Bhṛgu), (4) Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, (5) Vedavyāsa, (6) Buddha and (7) Kalkin; by adding three others, those of Nārāyaṇa, Narasiṃha and Vāmana (probably meant to be celestial ones), the full quota of ten is made up, though this list of Daśāvatāras widely differs from the usually accepted one; as many as four here, Dattātreya, Māndhāta, Vedavyāsa and Nārāyaṇa, are the substitutes of Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha and Balarama (or rarely Kṛṣṇa) of the usual list.

The evidence of the early and late *Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās* requires to be separately considered. The *Sātvata Saṃhitā*, one of the earliest in the series, enumerates as many as 39 incarnatory forms of the Lord, which list is copied almost *verbatim* by the *Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā*, evidently later in point of date than the *Sātvata*. These are: (1) Padmanābha, (2) Dhruva, (3) Ananta, (4) Śaktyātman, (5) Madhusūdana, (6) Vidyādhideva, (7) Kapila, (8) Viśvarūpa, (9) Vihaṅgama, (10) Krodātman, (11) Baḍavāvaktra, (12) Dharma, (13) Vāgī-

śvara, (14) Ekārṇavaśāyin, (15) Kamaṭheśvara, (16) Varāha, (17) Narasiṃha, (18) Pīyūṣaharaṇa, (19) Śrīpati, (20) Kāntātman, (21) Rāhujit, (22) Kālanemighna, (23) Pārijātahara, (24) Lokanātha, (25) Śāntātman, (26) Dattātreya, (27) Nyagrodhaśāyin, (28) Ekaśṛṅgatanu, (29) Vāmanadeha, (30) Trivikrama, (31) Nara, (32) Nārāyaṇa, (33) Hari, (34) Kṛṣṇa, (35) Paraśurāma, (36) Rāma Dhanurdhara, (37) Vedavid, (38) Kalkin, (39) Pātālaśayana. In this curious assortment, one can not only recognise the accepted ten names, a few of the sub-Vyūhas, as well as other Avatāras in the Purāṇic list quoted above, but also find in other names such as Vāgīśvara (no. 13) and Lokanātha (no. 24) deities belonging to the Mahāyāna Buddhist pantheon. Schrader attempts to identify many of these Avatāras on the basis of Purāṇic and other enumerations, and has been partially successful in his effort. But he has failed to recognise the identity of Śāntātman, (No. 25) in the list, who is no other than Buddha himself.[1] The name Śāntātman exactly corresponds to Śāntamanas, an epithet used in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Ch. 58, 19) to signify Buddha, and the *Agnipurāṇa* (Ch. 49, 8) uses the very word *Śāntātman* in describing (the image of) Buddha (*Śāntātmā lambakarṇaśca gaurāṅgaścāmbarāvṛtaḥ;* reference to the long pendulous ears of the Buddha image in this passage is to be noted). Thus, all the usual ten Avatāras can be recognised in the fuller list, and if Schrader's observation that 'the list of 39 Avatāras occurring in one of the very oldest Saṃhitās is older than the smaller lists found in later Saṃhitās, and older even than the *Mahābhārata* and *Nārāyaṇīya* lists, which appear to be mere selections' (*op. cit.* p. 47) is correct, then the inclusion of Buddha in it is significant.[2] Some of the later Saṃhitās like the *Ahirbudhnya*

[1] F. O. Schrader, *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra and the Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā*, pp. 43-6; Śāntātman, according to him, stands either for Sanatkumāra or Nārada.

[2] The stereotyped ten in this bigger list are: Nos. 28 (1. Matsya,—The fish incarnation had only one horn to which Manu's boat was bound), 15 (2. Kūrma), 16 (3. Varāha), 17 (4. Narasiṃha), 29-30 (5. Vāmana), 35 (6. Paraśurāma), 36 (7. Dāśarathi Rāma), 3 (8. Balarāma; Ananta in the *Sātvata* list is explained by Schrader as 'not the serpent Śeṣa, but Balarāma, the brother of Kṛṣṇa, who is sometimes regarded as an incarnation of Śeṣa rather than of Viṣṇu himself), 25 (9. Buddha) and 38 (10. Kalkin).

and the *Viśvaksena* distinguish between primary (*mukhya*) and secondary (*gauṇa, āveśa*) Avatāras. The latter says that the primary ones are like flame issuing from a flame (Viṣṇu himself with *aprākṛta* body), while the secondary ones are souls in bondage with a *prākṛta* body which is possessed (*āviṣṭa*) for some particular mission or function by the Śakti of Viṣnu. Brahmā, Śiva, Buddha, Vyāsa, Arjuna, Paraśurāma, the Vasu called Pāvaka (Agni) and Kubera are, according to this text, some of the *gauṇa* Avatāras. This text also expatiates on the great sanctity of the Arccā Avatāras, the images of the god and his various aspects, in which the divinity really descends according to the tenets of the developed creed of the Pāñcarātrins and Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas. Lastly, it may be pointed out that a quantitative study of the names of the Vyūhas and Vibhavas as enumerated in the different lists shows that the same name or form may denote either of the two aspects of the cult-god; a typical example of which is Saṃkarṣaṇa-Balarāma who is not only a primary Vyūha, but also a Vibhava. It should be noted, however, that iconic representations of Vyūha-Saṃkarṣaṇa and Vibhava-Saṃkarṣaṇa are different.

It has been necessary to delineate in the preceding pages a few of the principal tenets of the Bhakti cult centering round Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, because a knowledge of the same is essential for the correct understanding of the different ideologies underlying the various types of the Viṣṇuite icons. The central idea behind the tenets was essentially monotheistic, and an intelligent Pāñcarātra devotee would find in all the varieties of the icons (Arccās) of the Para, Vyūha and Vibhava aspects of his 'god of gods' (cf. *devadeva Vāsudeva* of the Besnagar inscription of Heliodorus) his different manifestations. In Chapters III, IV and V of this book, the epigraphic, numismatic and glyptic data regarding the prevalence of the cult in various parts of India from the Śuṅga to the Gupta periods have been discussed at some length. It will not be possible here to consider the large

number of literary data concerning the progress of the creed, other than those noticed occasionally. But before the iconography of several of the different types of Viṣṇuite icons are discussed at some length, it will be of interest to say something about the part played by the Pāñcarātrins in the dissemination of the practice of image-worship in ancient and mediaeval India. The images worshipped by them were principally anthropomorphic, occasionally theriomorphic or therio-anthropomorphic, and the Pāñcarātra theologians exulted in endowing their god and many of his various aspects with human traits. They even went to the length of personalising the weapons and emblems of the god of their choice and representing them in human form as Āyudhapuruṣas. There was some difference between them and their Śaiva counterparts in this respect, for the Śaiva devotees came to worship their god in his principal emblem, the Śivaliṅga, which was almost invariably enshrined in the main sanctum of the shrines of Śiva from a very early time. It is not meant, however, by this that the anthropomorphic images of Śiva were not held in high esteem by the Śaivas, but these were mainly utilised as decorative reliefs and sculptures in the Śaiva temples, many of which illustrated the different myths associated with Śiva and his various aspects.[1] The Pāñcarātrins or the Vaiṣṇavas, on the other hand, seldom (if at all) enshrined a mere emblem of their god in the main sanctum, the aniconic emblems like the Śālagrāmas being given a subsidiary position in the public shrines or worshipped in private chapels of the individual householders. The *Nārada Pañcarātra* (*Bhāradvāja Saṃhitā Pariśiṣṭa*, III, 57-8) tells us that 'Hari is to be always worshipped in images; but when these are wanting, then alone other objects are to be used for this purpose. Of these objects again, Śālagrāmas are the best, for a Śālagrāma stone is the celestial form of Hari'. The Besnagar and Nagari inscrip-

[1] The Vīraśaivas or Liṅgāyats, a comparatively late branch of the Śaiva sect, were averse to the practice of worshipping the deity in his anthropomorphic form; to them the Śivaliṅga was the most sacred object symbolising the greatness of the divinity, and they carried it on their body in some form or other throughout life from the time of their initiation.

tions of the pre-Christian period, undoubtedly refer to the existence of Bhāgavata shrines in the ancient towns of Vidiśā and Madhyamikā. The images that were once installed in them must have been destroyed in course of time. Epigraphic data about the erection of similar shrines at Mathura and other places in the early centuries of the Christian era have to some extent been corroborated by the actual finds of Viṣṇuite images. The temples (*devagṛhas*) which housed them might not always have been elaborate structures, but were sacred places with these cult objects placed on raised pedestals (cf. the *utthitā āsakāḥ* of the Yakṣas mentioned by Patañjali, *supra*, p. 338) inside them very carefully fenced off by railings. The Nagari and Mathura inscriptions emphasise these railings (cf. the word *pūjāśilāprākāra* in the former and *vedikā* in the latter), though the latter also mentions the erection of a *toraṇa* (gateway) and a *devakula* (temple) in the *Mahāsthāna* of Vāsudeva. Early numismatic data, occasionally indicating the existence of structural shrines (cf. some coins of the Audumbaras and a few of Huvishka), very frequently show the railings which usually demarcated these *Sthānas*.[1]

A few words about the sectarian exclusiveness of the Vaiṣṇavas, especially with regard to their ritualistic practice, will not be out of place here. This exclusive spirit is more noticeable in such late works as the apocryphal *Nārada Pañcarātra*. It says that 'such gods as Brahmā, Rudra, Dikpālas, Sūrya, their Śaktis or their children should neither be worshipped daily, nor ever be resorted to for the fulfilment of any desire. No (Vaiṣṇava) should stay for a single day or take food and drink in a house or a village in which there are no images of Viṣṇu. Images enshrined and worshipped by heretics and Śaivas are always to be shunned; all the gods (*i.e.*, their images), even if they are worshipped according to the rituals prescribed for them, should be

[1] The railings which are very often depicted beneath the feet of many Yakṣas, Yakṣiṇīs, Nāgas and Nāginīs in the early Buddhist art of Central India, though serving the purpose of pedestals of these Vyantara devatās, really indicate the fences of their shrines.

avoided. No food ought to be taken (by a Vaiṣṇava) in the house of one, where there are images of other divinities, but Janārddana (*i.e.*, his image) is absent, even if the householder be well-versed in the Vedāntas'.[1] This, however, presents to us only one side of the picture. What a striking contrast to this is the mental attitude showing the catholicity of spirit found in the *Bhagavadgītā*![2]

Numerous are the iconographic texts which describe the images of Viṣṇu and his various aspects, one of the earliest among them being the five couplets in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*. But this description is of a general nature, which refers mainly to the number of the hands of the god, to the marks and ornaments on his body, his colour, the weapons and attributes held by his hands, etc.[3] There is no mention of his attendants, of the 'attitude' (standing, seated or recumbent) in which he is to be shown and of many other important and necessary details. As has just been pointed out, the Viṣṇuite images have to be divided into three groups of Para, Vyūha and Vibhava, the Dhruvaberas described in the *Vaikhānasāgama*, an early Pāñcarātra text, most probably symbolising in a way the first group. Descriptions

[1] *Bhāradvāja Saṃhitā Pariśiṣṭa*. IV, 4, 28, 30-1.

[2] IV. 11; IX. 23: *Ye yathā māṃ prapadyante tāṃstathaiva bhajāmyaham* | *Mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ Pārtha sarvaśaḥ* || . . . . . *Ye'pyanyadevatābhaktā yajante Śraddhayānvitāḥ* | *Te'pi māmeva Kaunteya yajantyavidhipūrvakam* ||

[3] Ch. 57, vv. 31-5; *Kāryo'ṣṭabhujo bhagavāṃścaturbhujo dvibhujo eva vā Viṣṇuḥ* | *Śrīvatsāṅkitavakṣaḥ kaustubhamaṇibhūṣitoraskaḥ* || *Atasīkusumaśyāmaḥ pītāmbaranivasanaḥ prasannamukhaḥ* || *Kuṇḍalakirīṭadhārī pīnagalorassthalāṃsabhujaḥ* || *Khaḍgagadāśarapāṇirdakṣiṇatas'śāntidaścaturthakaraḥ* | *Vāmakareṣu ca kārmukakheṭakacakrāṇi śaṅkhaśca* || *Atha ca caturbhujamicchanti śāntida eko gadādharaścānyaḥ* | *Dakṣiṇapārśve hyevaṃ vāme śaṅkhaśca cakraṃ ca* || *Dvibhujasya tu śāntikaro dakṣiṇahasto'parasca śaṅkhadharaḥ* | *Evaṃ Viṣṇoḥ pratimā kartavyā bhūtimicchadbhiḥ* ||

The gist of the extract is as follows :—' Eight, four or two should be the number of Viṣṇu's hands; his breast should be adorned with the *śrīvatsa* mark and the *kaustubha* jewel; his colour should be of that of the *atasī* flower (yellowish green), he should wear yellow garments, ear-rings, jewelled crown; (when eight-armed), his right hands should show a sword, a mace, an arrow and *abhaya mudrā*; while his left ones should hold a bow, a shield, a wheel and a conch-shell; if he is four-armed, his right hands should show an assurance pose (*abhaya mudrā*) and a mace, the left hands holding a conch-shell and a wheel; in a two-armed Viṣṇu, the right hand should be in the *abhaya* pose, the left one holding a conch-shell.'

of the Vyūha and Vibhava groups are found in this and many other iconographic texts incorporated in the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, Purāṇas etc., a few only of which can be noticed in connection with the account of these image-groups. Some of the major accessories to the Vaiṣṇava images, like Garuḍa and the Āyudhapuruṣas will also have to be accounted for in a subsequent chapter. But it will be of interest now to study briefly but critically the *Vaikhānasāgama* account of the Dhruvaberas of Viṣṇu. According to it, there are as many as thirty-six varieties of such images. This classification has already been briefly noticed in Chapter I, p. 26, f.n. 2, of this book. First, the different Dhruva (according to Rao 'immovable' or permanently enshrined) types of images are divided into four broad varieties, *yoga*, *bhoga*, *vīra* and *abhicārika* by name on the basis of particular results to be attained by the devotee after worshipping them; then, each of these groups is subdivided into three classes according to the 'attitude' in which such images are shown—*sthānaka* (standing), *āsana* (seated) and *sayana* (recumbent);[1] lastly, everyone of these twelve sub-groups is divided into three classes as *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*, according to the number of accessory figures that cluster round the central deity.[2] Images of the Buddha can also be grouped under three heads, standing, seated and recumbent, but in their case particular incidents in the life of the Master are associated with most of these varieties; the earlier specimens of the standing Buddha figures, though dignified by calm repose, are also frequently shown as stepping forward and thus are not fully static in their pose. But the *sthānaka* varieties of Viṣṇu images are shown in *ṛjvāyata* or *samapādasthānaka* (straight, frontal and static) pose

[1] Rao refers to some south Indian Viṣṇu temples the central shrines of which have three storeys, ' each storey being occupied by an image of Viṣṇu, the standing, sitting and reclining images being placed in the lowermost, middle and uppermost storeys in order '; *op. cit.*, Vol. I., Pt. I, p. 79.

[2] *Vaikhānasāgama* as quoted by T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Appendix C, pp. 17-26.

without the suggestion of any perceptible movement in them. As regards the *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama* orders, reference may be made to Grünwedel's interesting observation about the 'parallel compositions' in the Hellenistic art of Gandhāra. He remarks about the reliefs depicting scenes from Buddha's life and their replicas, ' besides slabs where the figures are numerous, a *scriptio plena* as one might say, there is often found a *defectiva* which retains the main design but curtails the rest, thus frequently omitting just what is most important ' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 125).

The Vaikhānasāgama classification of the Vaiṣṇava Dhruvaberas is not to be found in most (if not all) of the other iconographic texts dealing with such icons. When Gopinath Rao says that 'the materials for the description of the images of Viṣṇu are not so abundant as they are in the case of the images of Śiva', he presumably means that there are not many texts like this particular one; for he himself has collected a number of relevant texts associated with Viṣṇu under *Vaiṣṇavamūrtyantarāṇi* ('other varieties of Viṣṇu images') in the Appendix C to the first Volume of his monumental work. These texts help us a great deal in identifying and describing the many varieties of these icons of the ancient, mediaeval and subsequent periods found in different parts of India. The *Vaikhānasāgama* mode of grouping the main images of Viṣṇu as 'standing', 'seated' and 'reclining' would very well be applicable to all such images, for most of them are shown in one or other of these poses. The other basis of classification into *yoga*, *bhoga*, *vīra* and *abhicārika* groups, however, is only occasionally followed in the north and even in the south of India. Even when Viṣṇu is depicted seated in *yogāsana* with his 'natural' (front) hands in the *dhyānamudrā*, he is lavishly decorated with ornaments, and sometimes accompanied by both or one of his consorts (Śrī and Puṣṭi or Sarasvatī according to the north Indian convention, or Śrī and Bhū according to the south Indian custom), indicating that such images fall under both the classes, *yoga* and *bhoga*. Rao himself could not illustrate the *vīra* and *abhicārika* varieties from

south India.[1] A plausible explanation of the paucity or complete absence of the last two varieties can be suggested. As the second of them was certainly of an inauspicious character, such a one was most probably not preserved after worship. Rao says : ' The *abhicārika* form which is worshipped for the purpose of inflicting defeat and death on enemies is looked upon as inauspicious and is unfit to be set up for worship in temples built in towns and villages' (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 20-1). These were set up and worshipped in forests, mountains, marshy tracts, fortresses and other such places (*vanagirijaladurge rāṣṭrānte śatrudiṅmukhe*). One Abhicārikasthānakamūrti was recognised by me in the black chlorite Viṣṇu figure of the early mediaeval period originally found in Chaitanpur (Burdwan district, Bengal) and now in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The *bhoga* varieties are the most numerous ones, and the reason for this is obvious ; the acquisition of wealth and prosperity is the desire of the majority of such worshippers. Rao observes : 'The *bhoga* form is the form best fitted to have the temple thereof constructed within towns and villages, as it is conceived to be the giver of all happiness to its worshippers and has therefore to be worshipped and prayed to by all sorts of men and women belonging to all conditions of life' (*Ibid.*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 20). *Vīra* varieties of Viṣṇuite icons have not been found by me during my close study of the principal types of numerous Viṣṇu images in the different museums of India, as well as early and mediaeval temple reliefs in north and south India.

It will not be possible for me to notice at length the iconographic features of these varieties of images as given in the *Vaikhānasāgama*. Rao has done that in his book and I should like to refer my readers to it (*op. cit.*, Vol. 1, Pt. I, pp. 80-96). The illustrations that he could give corresponded partly to the *yoga* (rarely) and *bhoga* types ; I

[1] The seated Viṣṇu from Aihole labelled Adhamavīrāsanamūrti in pl. XXX of Rao's first volume cannot really be described as such ; the god is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose on the coils of *Ādiśeṣa*, and the description given of a Vīrāsanamūrti given in the *Vaikhānasāgama* does not at all tally with it.

myself have described a number of two-, four- and eight-armed *sthānakamūrtis* of Viṣṇu found in various parts of Northern and Eastern India and belonging to different periods (from the early centuries of the Christian era to the mediaeval times) which conform partially to the description given in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (already quoted) and other later texts.[1] I shall only select here a few from the latter group, and explain their special features with the help of a few illustrations. The images have been placed by me under the group of Dhruvaberas in the sense that they illustrate the principal (probably Para) aspect of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* account of such images proves that two-, four- and eight-armed images of the god were well in vogue in the sixth century A.D. or even earlier.[2] Relief No. 2520 in the collection of the late Pandit Radha Krishna of Mathura contains one of the earliest extant four-armed images of the god; 'Viṣṇu holds a heavy mace and a wheel in the back right and left hands, the two normal hands being exactly like those in the Bodhisattva images, *i.e.*, the right in *abhayamudrā* and the left holding a monk's bottle of long neck and conical bottom'.[3] Notice may be taken here also of one of the four-armed *sthānakamūrtis* of Viṣṇu carved on the facade of the Chandragupta (II) cave at Udayagiri near Besnagar. The figure is very much damaged; it has the usual ornaments, its back hands are placed on the heads of the Cakrapuruṣa and Gadādevī; the broken right seems to have been in the *abhaya* pose, the front left holding a conch-shell; the mark on its breast (Pl. II, Fig. 11) is one of the early variants of the *śrīvatsa*. The Udayagiri relief very closely agrees with the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* description. The two-armed colossal standing image of Viṣṇu found by Carlleyle

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 68-81. I regret that I could not illustrate them, but the pen-pictures given there are based on my first-hand study of most, if not all, of them.

[2] V. S. Agrawala noticed an eight-armed fragmentary Viṣṇu image of the Kushan period; the attributes in the hands that are preserved do not conform to the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* description (*J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. V, p. 124, pl. XIV, Fig. 3).

[3] Agrawala's remark on the relief (c. 1st century A.D.) is worth noting: 'It shows the transition from a Buddhist to a Brahmanical image'; *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. V, p. 124, pl. XIV, Fig. 2.

at Rupavas (near Fatehpur Sikri, U.P.) is also in partial agreement with the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* description of a Dvibhuja Viṣṇu.[1] The Badami stone figure of an eight-armed *sthānaka* Viṣṇu shows in its four right hands *cakra*, *śara*, *gadā* and *khaḍga*, and in its three left ones, *śaṅkha*, *kheṭaka* and *dhanu*, the front left hand being in the *kaṭihasta* pose. A curious bust on the top of the *kirīṭa* of the figure, seemingly of Narasiṃha, led Rao to call it Vaikuṇṭha. But the *Rūpamaṇḍana* describes Vaikuṇṭha as four-faced and eight-armed, the central, the right, the left and the back faces being that of a man, Narasiṃha, Varāha, and a woman respectively. Thus, Rao is not justified in describing the Badami relief as Vaikuṇṭha.[2] The eight-armed Viṣṇu figure from Conjeevaram, reproduced by H. Krishna Sastri in his *South Indian Gods and Goddesses* (p. 17, Fig. 11), as well as the Badami figure just mentioned, shows that the emblems in the eight hands fairly correspond to those enjoined by the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*.

The three four-armed *sthānaka* Viṣṇu images of the general order, one in stone and two others in bronze, reproduced in Pl. XXI, and Pl. XXII (Figs. 1 and 3), though they hail from different regions of India, illustrate in a very striking manner the uniformity in the matter of placing the attributes or emblems in their four hands. The first image (Pl. XXI), a potstone one fully in the round, discovered in Taxila and noticed by A. D. Siddiqui (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1935-6, p. 35, Pl. XLa), shows its back right and left hands placed on the top of a *gadā* and a *cakra* respectively, the front right and left hands holding a *padma* and a *śaṅkha;* the ornaments are not many, the jewelled *kirīṭa* (in the shape of a turreted crown shown on the heads of city goddesses in Gandhāran art), the *hāra*, *yajñopavīta*, *vanamālā* being prominent; the *śiraścakra* (halo) with a decorated rim

Carlleyle wrongly described it as either Buddha or Sūrya; but his description is correct (*A.S.R.*, Vol. VI, p. 20). The two hands of the god carry a *śaṅkha* and a *cakra*.

[2] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 256, pl. LXXV. Banerjee's identification of this figure as Virāṭa Puruṣa (Viṣṇu in his gigantic form) is also not tenable (*M.A.S.I.*, No. 25, p. 31, pl. XIV b).

behind the head is well proportioned. There are some interesting iconographic traits here, which require comment: the *gadā* reminds one of the club held by the composite deity in the Hephtalite Nicolo Seal (Pl. XI, Fig. 2), or the club held by Śiva in some copper coins of Maues (Pl. IX, Fig. 18), or in the seal of Śivarakṣita (Pl. XI, Fig. 5); the *cakra* is placed on a pedestal as it appears on one of the Viṣṇu figures in the Chandragupta cave facade at Udayagiri; the half-length figure of Garuḍa (or is it a female figure?) on the plain pedestal between the legs of the deity is very similar to the partially shown Yakṣa figures below Buddha frontally represented in some Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa reliefs hailing from Gandhāra; the folds of the loin-cloth, the only garment worn by the figure, remind us of the heavy folds of drapery of late Gandhāra Buddhas; there are no attendant figures by its side. The image thus contains many still persisting Gandhāran traits, and the static heaviness of the figure with its clear-cut face is not displeasing (one cannot fully agree with Siddiqui's opinion about its 'rather crude workmanship'). A pleasing contrast to it are the two delicate bronzes shown in Pl. XXII, the first of which found at Nalanda is now in the local Museum. The god stands in the *samapādasthānaka* pose, has a beautiful ornamental halo behind his head, and the usual ornaments; *vanamālā*, sacred thread, etc. are tastefully displayed; his back hands pointing downwards hold *gadā* and *cakra* as in the Taxila sculpture, the front ones hold a lotus-bud and a conch-shell (not quite distinct in the reproduction). The pedestal is elaborate, in the left corner of which is a tiny figure with folded hands (probably Garuḍa, it may also stand for the donor). The bronze belongs to the early mediaeval period and is characterised by graceful modelling which has to some extent subdued the hieratic stiffness of such figures. This unfortunately cannot be said with regard to the second bronze Viṣṇu which hails from Rangpur (north Bengal, now in Eastern Pakistan) and is now an exhibit in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The elaborate and effulgent *prabhāvalī*, the *śiraścakra* in the form of a lotus with flames issuing from its outer rim, the *pañca-*

ratha pedestal in three tiers, the usual attendants Śrī and Puṣṭi holding a lotus and a *vīṇā* respectively, and other features prove that hieratism in art has developed much; though the moulding is delicate and graceful to some extent, the hieratic stiffness is quite clear in this bronze figure of the 11th century A.D. The iconographic treatment, the manner of the disposition of the emblems, the decorations and the positions of the hands also show a considerable development.

The first two of the Viṣṇu images just noticed do not appear to be in any way connected with the *Vaikhānasāgama* classification discussed above. They are portable ones, and thus cannot be really described as Dhruvaberas. But they can be presumed to illustrate the Para aspect of the god, though, as we shall show later, the particular order of placing the emblems in the four hands would also connect them with the Sub-Vyūha, Trivikrama. The Rangpur bronze image follows to a great extent the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* and other texts[1] describing *caturbhuja sthānaka* Viṣṇu, but it can also with some justification be dubbed as Adhama Bhogasthānakamūrti, though not a Dhruvabera in the proper sense of the term. The 12th century A.D. stone image of four-armed standing Viṣṇu hailing from Sarisadaha, 24 Pergannas, Bengal (now exhibit No. 2592 in the Indian Museum) seems to stand for a Yogasthānakamūrti of Viṣṇu and has other interesting traits. The god is shown standing on a *navaratha* pedestal, back hands resting on the Gadādevī and Cakrapuruṣa, his front right hand holds a lotus-bud, and the front left, a conch-shell. But what is of unique interest here is that in the extreme corners of the relief composition are shown two other Āyudhas personified, Śaṅkhapuruṣa with his right hand in the *vyākhyāna* pose and his left hand holding a lotus with a long stalk on whose pericarp is placed a tiny conch-shell, and the Padmapuruṣa with his right hand in *abhayamudrā* and his left hand holding a long-stalk lotus. These two Āyudhapuruṣas, very unusual in such compositions,

1 For a short but critical study of such texts, cf. *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 74-6; for some extant images more or less corresponding to these descriptions, see *ibid.*, pp. 78-81.

replace the divine consorts (Śrī and Puṣṭi); this feature and the tiny ascetic-like figure of the donor on the extreme left corner of the pedestal leave little doubt that the image, inspite of its profuse ornaments, stands for the Yogasthānakamūrti of Viṣṇu. The unique Abhicārikasthānakamūrti of Viṣṇu found at Chaitanpur (Burdwan), already referred to by me, may now be described. The central deity is almost fully in the round, its head and shoulders are encircled by a halo and its right and left hands are placed on the heads of Gadādevī and Cakrapuruṣa; its front right and left hands hold a lotus-bud and a conch-shell. The figure is very sparsely ornamented, a curious string of amulets round the neck replacing the usual *hāra* and *vanamālā;* the loin-cloth devoid of any artistic arrangement is treated in a very uncouth manner; the elongated and drawn face, the big protruding eyes, the muscles and bones shown prominently and the partially emaciated belly—all these features correspond to a great extent to the *Vaikhānasāgama* description of the Abhicārikasthānakamūrti of Viṣṇu. It is one of the most unique types so far discovered, and R. P. Chanda's description of it as an inferior specimen of the Gupta period requires comment and modification. The black basalt image is of c. 7th century A.D. (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 2).[1]

The extant seated (*āsana*) varieties of Viṣṇu images are much less numerous. They can be subdivided into several groups (other than *yoga*, *bhoga*, etc.), according as they are depicted seated on the coils of Ādiśeṣa in the *lalitāsana* pose, or on the shoulders of Garuḍa in different ways (sometimes alone, or at other times along with his consort Lakṣmī), or again in some form of *yogāsana*, such as *padmāsana* on a *viśvapadma*. The relief shown in the centre of the principal architrave in the main sanctum of the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogarh (Jhansi District, Uttar Prades) belonging to the Gupta period is of the first group, and can be described as the prototype of the Ādimūrti of the *Vaikhānasāgama*. The god is accompanied by two consorts, one of whom is sham-

1 *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 159-61 and plate.

pooing his leg dangling down the piled-up coils of the snake; the whole composition is very graceful and shows the characteristic excellence of the Gupta art.[1] One of the earliest of the Garuḍāsana Viṣṇu images is the very unique sculpture in greyish black stone, about 6′ 4″ in height found near Lakshankati (Backergunge district, East Bengal). The four-armed god sits lightly in *lalitāsana* on the outstretched wings of his mount, Garuḍa, shown as about to soar upwards; his back right and left hands hold two lotuses by their stalks, on the pericarps of which are depicted miniature seated figures of Gaja-Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī playing on an antique-shaped harp; the front right and left hands hold a *cakra* (with Cakrapuruṣa inside it) and the miniature figure of Gadādevī; a tiny figure of four-armed Yogāsana Viṣṇu is shown on the *kirīṭamakuṭa* of the god who wears his other usual ornaments. These extremely uncommon iconographic traits characterise this well-carved image as one of the most outstanding artistic remains of ancient Bengal of the early mediaeval period.[2] There are other reliefs of a later period where Viṣṇu is shown seated on the back of his mount with Lakṣmī seated on his left thigh. Such a one from Basta (near Dacca) shows one leg of each of the couple resting on the back hands of Garuḍa (he is four-armed here), his front hands being in the *añjali* pose.[3]

Two Āsanamūrtis reproduced in Pl. XXIII (Fig. 2) and Pl. XXIV are of outstanding importance from the iconographic point of view. The first hailing from Mathura (Mathura Museum, No. 379) is the north-Indian version of Yogāsana Viṣṇu with lotus halo, usual ornaments and the miniature figures of Brahmā and Śiva on the top left and right corners of the rectangular stele (the concept of Brahmanical triad is thus present here). The back hands of the god hold *gadā* and *cakra* and the natural hands in the *yogamudrā* are placed on the lap; he sits in *yogāsana* pose on a jewelled seat spread over a *śaṅkha* shown sideways on a plain

1 Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. X, pl. XXXVI.
2 N. K. Bhattasali, *op. cit.*, p. 88, pl. XXXIV.
3 N. K. Bhattasali, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-7, pl. XXXII.

pedestal on the left and right corners of which are the donor couple and Garuḍa respectively. The lotus on the halo and the conch-shell on the pedestal along with mace and wheel in the hands of the god really make up the full quota of the divine emblems. This well-carved sculpture belongs to the 9th or the 10th century A.D. The other sculpture of about the same date from Khajuraho (Madhya Bharat) is unique from the point of view of the pose of its front left hand (already commented on earlier in this book, *supra*, p. 261); the god seems to insist on silence and tranquillity so very necessary for concentration in this characteristic manner. The god sits in *yogāsana* on a lotus of drooping petals, wears almost identical ornaments as the other figure (a beautifully displayed *vanamālā* is the extra adornment in this figure), has two female attendants (probably Śrī and Bhūmi) by his side and two garland-bearing flying Vidyādharas on the top corners of the stele; the right hands of the god are broken, the back one of which must have held a mace (its stump can still be seen), the back left holding a *cakra*. There are three figures on the pedestal, which stand for the donors and the divine mount. It is one of the finest examples of mediaeval hieratic art of Central India, and no iconographic text is known to me, which might have been used by the sculptor in this case.[1]

If the Āsanamūrtis of Viṣṇu are rare in comparison with his Sthānakamūrtis, his Śayanamūrtis are rarer still in the north and east of India. This is not so in the south, for as it has been already said by me in Chapter VII that this type known there under such names as Raṅgasvāmī, Raṅganātha, etc. (really typifying the Nārāyaṇa element of the composite god) is the principal figure in many of the south Indian Vaiṣṇava shrines. I shall refer here to two well-known figures, one in terracotta and the other in stone, which illustrate the north Indian type of Śeṣaśayanamūrti. The terracotta plaque, originally decorating the Bhitargaon (Kanpur, U.P.) brick temple of c. 5th

[1] Kramrisch was the first to draw our attention to it; *cf. J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. I, pp. 99-100, pl. XXX.

century A.D. and now an exhibit in the Indian Museum, summarily depicts the motif in this manner: The god is shown resting half recumbent on the coils of Ādiśeṣa whose hoods are spread over his head; a lotus issues out of his navel (one of his names is Padmanābha) on whose blossom sits Brahmā (known also as Padmayoni); near the legs of the god are shown the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha in a fighting posture. The figure is a striking example of the potters' art in Northern India of the Gupta period. The Deogarh stone relief (Pl. XXII, Fig. 2) of c. 6th century A.D. illustrates the theme in a much more elaborate manner. The whole composition is divided, as it were, in three parallel sections, in the central one of which is shown the four-armed god gracefully recumbent on the coils of the snake, its many hoods serving as his canopy, Lakṣmī massaging his legs, one male and one female figure (probably Gadādevi and Cakrapuruṣa) standing behind her; the centre of the top section is occupied by Brahmā seated on a lotus the stalk of which issues from the body of Nārāyaṇa, and he is flanked on either side by Hara-Pārvatī on bull and Indra and Kārttikeya on their respective mounts (all these figures as well as a Vidyādhara on the extreme right corner, except Brahmā, are shown as hovering in the sky). The bottom section depicts the fight between the two demons and four attendants (one of them is a female) of the god (some of them may represent the personified Āyudhas). Vincent Smith's suggestion about the central figure being an Indian copy of the Greek sculpture Endymion (a copy of which is in the Stockholm Museum) has already been commented on by me (*supra*, pp. 276-77). There can be no two opinions about the grace and beauty of the entire composition which testifies to the masterly skill of the Gupta artist. This elaborate relief is placed in one of the outside niches of the temple, the god in it being thus a Pārśvadevatā of the main deity (no other than the prototype of the Ādimūrti already noticed).

The ideology behind the Vyūha doctrine of the Pāñcarātrins has already been delineated in this chapter. It

will now be necessary to say a few more words about the mode of its illustration. The deification of Vāsudeva and some of his near relations lay at its root, and as the Bhakti cult centering round him was essentially monotheistic the concept of one composite god was developed in which all these *three* entities were merged into *One*. The couplet incorporated in the Nāgapatnīstuti of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (Bk. X, Ch. 16, V. 45) demonstrates this idea in a very characteristic manner. The wives of Nāga Kāliya pay obeisance to Kṛṣṇa chastising their husband in these words: *Namaḥ Kṛṣṇāya Rāmāya Vasudevasutāya ca* l *Pradyumnāy-Āniruddhvāya Sāttvatāṃ pataye namaḥ*. Kṛṣṇa (Vāsudeva) is named first as he should be, for he is the fountain-head of divinity, and then come successively Rāma (Saṃkarṣaṇa-Balarāma), Pradyumna and Aniruddha, but all these four are described singly as *the son of Vasudeva* and *the Lord of the Sāttvatas* (the singular number in the words *suta* and *pati* should be noted). This concept of '*One in Four*' described in the cult treatises as 'Caturvyūha' or 'Viṣṇu Caturmūrti' is strikingly illustrated by the four-faced, four-(or rarely more-) armed early mediaeval Viṣṇu images from Northern India, mostly Kashmir. A much-mutilated figure of Viṣṇu Caturmūrti from the latter place is reproduced here (Pl. XXII, Fig. 5) by way of illustration. The three faces of the god are visible here, the fourth one, a demoniacal face on the back, cannot be seen; the central face is human, the side faces on the right and left are stylised ones of a lion and a boar. He wears profuse ornaments, the partially preserved front right hand holds a lotus, while the back left hand is placed on an Āyudhapuruṣa (probably Cakrapuruṣa); a slight bend in the body lends grace to the curious composition. R. C. Kāk illustrates a much better preserved specimen of this type in the collection of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar (*Handbook of the Archaeological and Numismatic Sections*, p. 49, Fig. Aa. 21), where the additional details are the following: the front hands hold a lotus and a conch-shell, the back hands rest on the heads of Cakrapuruṣa and Gadādevī; a half-raised female figure shown between his

legs probably represents the earth-goddess as in the Gandhāra Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa scenes (this figure may be compared with a similar one in the potstone Viṣṇu from Taxila already noted). Eight-armed images of this type are found in the Mārttaṇḍa temple, Kashmir, and a few four-armed ones were also recovered from Mathura and Banaras. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, Ch. 85) calls this composite icon in which four or rather three other aspects of the god are rolled into one as Vaikuṇṭha. In another context (Bk. III, Ch. 47, 2-17), the same text explains the real nature of and the esoterism underlying it in a very interesting manner; the four faces of the god of gods are regarded to typify *bala*, *jñāna*, *aiśvarya* and *śakti* associated with Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, the esoteric significance of the attributes, ornaments, garment, etc. is laid down, and lastly, it is observed that with such a body, the God, the greatest in the universe, sustains the whole world.' The texts also allocate the four faces in this way: the front or the eastern (human) face is that of Vāsudeva, the right or the southern face (lion) is that of Saṃkarṣaṇa, the left or the northern one (boar) is that of Pradyumna, and the back or the western one (*kāpila* or raudra—the terrific) that of Aniruddha. The lion- and the boar-faces are thus primarily associated with the Pāñcarātra Vyūhas and not with the Nṛsiṃha and Varāha incarnations, though the latter might have helped to some extent the formation of this concept. It is curious that Saṃkarṣaṇa in whom *jñāna* is particularly manifest and who according to the *Mahābhārata* was the expounder of the Sātvata Vidhi (VI. 66, 40: *Sāttvataṃ vidhimāsthāya gītaḥ Saṃkarṣaṇena vai*) should have a lion-face, and Pradyumna in whom *aiśvarya* is the predominant *guṇa*, a boar-face. Aniruddha's association with frightful demoniacal face on the back of Viṣṇu Caturmūrti may be explained by the fact that his attendants, Āmoda and Pramoda, carrying *śaktis* partake of the nature of Dhanada (Kubera, the lord of the Yakṣas) and Śiva. Aniruddha is also regarded in some Pāñcarātra texts to represent Ahaṃkāra (Saṃkaraṣaṇa and Pradyumna, in this

context, stand for Jīva and Manas respectively), and that may also explain his connection with the uncouth Yakṣa-like face on the back.

Side by side with this composite form of Viṣṇu Caturmūrti were worshipped the Twenty-four Forms of Viṣṇu (Caturviṃśatimūrtis) in different parts of India. Their names and the process of their emanation have been briefly accounted for earlier in this chapter. Rao observes about their images, ' All these twenty-four images are very alike; they are all standing figures, with no bends in the body, possessing four arms, and adorned with the *kirīta*-crown and other usual ornaments; each of them stands upon a *padmāsana*. The difference between any two of these images has to be made out by the way in which the *śaṅkha*, the *cakra*, the *gadā* and the *padma* are found distributed among their four hands. It is worthy of note that the number of possible permutations of four things taken four at a time is exactly twenty-four; and the order in which the permutations of these four articles, among the four hands is to be observed, is in passing, as in a circle, from the upper right hand to the upper left hand, thence to the lower left hand, and from there lastly to the lower right hand' (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 227-28). But this chief criterion of differentiation is liable to be misinterpreted and is prone to lead to confusion in naming the individual icons of the order. Rao's remark that the circle begins from the upper right hand of the image is not clear; for the *Rūpamaṇḍana* text which is taken by him as a reliable one in this matter expressly lays down that ' such images should be known (as holding these emblems) from their lower right hand onwards ' (*Etāstu mūrttayo jñeyā dakṣiṇādhaḥ karāt kramāt*). The *Agni-purāṇa* begins the description of these images with this couplet: *Oṃ rūpaḥ Keśavaḥ padmaśaṅkhacakragadādharaḥ | Nārāyaṇaḥ śaṅkhapadmagadācakrī pradakṣiṇam* (Ch. 48, v. 1). The last word *pradakṣiṇam* in this couplet and the slight variations in the order of the emblems contain the most important indications in this description. We are to understand from these clues that a lotus, a conch-shell, a discus and

a mace are held by Keśava in his lower right, upper right, upper left and lower left hands respectively; Nārāyaṇa's hands in this order, on the other hand, will hold a conch-shell, a lotus, a mace and a discus. Various Purāṇas like the *Padma*, *Agni* (*Viṣṇudharmottara*, however, does not seem to contain any description of this group of Viṣṇu images) and such comparatively late compilations as *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, *Rūpamaṇḍana* and *Devatāmūrttiprakaraṇa* contain mnemonic descriptions of this group of Viṣṇu images. There are differences in these texts, and there is no way of ascertaining their relative correctness. B. B. Bidyabinod made a comparative study of some of these passages from the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, *Agni* and *Padmapurāṇas*, pointed out the differences in a few of these descriptions and rightly observed that ' a decisive identification is not always possible in the present state of our documents.' He illustrates four of such images, dubbed Trivikrama, Janārddana, Adhokṣaja and Śrīdhara (all in the Indian Museum) on the basis of most of these texts.[1] The four-armed Sthānakamūrtis of Viṣṇu of a general order previously discussed by me, most of them hailing from Northern and Eastern India, show the placing of the emblems in the hands in the following manner: *padma* in the lower right, *gadā* in the upper right, *cakra* in the upper left and *śaṅkha* in the lower left. According to most of the texts, this disposition of the emblems would justify one in describing these images as Trivikrama in terms of Caturviṃśatimūrtis. The preponderance of the Trivikrama form in such images may show indirectly the influence of the Vedic constituent in the composite cult-picture, the Āditya Viṣṇu, one of whose common epithets is Trivikrama. Rao's remark about the Caturviṃśatimūrtis being invariably of the *sthānaka* order has already been quoted; but seated images of this order, though rare, are not unknown. A beautiful bronze four-armed figure of Śrīdhara (according to

1 *M.A.S.I.*, No. 2, pp. 23-33, pls. VII-VIII. Gopinath Rao illustrates some of these Caturviṃśatimūrtis from late mediaeval temples of Mysore; the reliefs are highly ornamental, and they belong to the Hoysala school of sculpture; *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pls. LXIX-LXXI.

the authority of *Agnipurāṇa* and *Rūpamaṇḍana*) or Hṛṣīkeśa (according to that of *Padmapurāṇa*) in the Vangiya Sahitya Parishat collection is shown seated in *sukhāsana* on a lotus pedestal with a separate *prabhāvalī* showing stylised flames and *kīrttimukha* on it. The emblems *cakra*, *gadā* and *śaṇkha* are placed on full-blown lotuses held by the three hands of the god by their stalks, the fourth hand showing a tiny lotus-bud on its palm. The general characteristics of the figure and the peculiar manner of placing the emblems on its hands put it in the category of Lokeśvara-Viṣṇu images of Eastern India to be discussed by me in the last chapter of this book.[1]

The doctrine of the Vibhavas, no less a component part of the Pāñcarātra creed than that of the Vyūhas, has already been explained, and the different lists of the Avatāras given in different texts scrutinised. It will now be necessary to describe first a few of the images illustrating the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu, and then to give a brief account of a few other sculptures which illustrate some of the Avatāras mentioned in the bigger and more comprehensive lists. Ten Avatāras carved in a row on stone slabs were usually placed in different parts of the Vaiṣṇava shrines as decorative reliefs edifying the pious. They were also represented on one side of the small stone or metal plaques known as Viṣṇupaṭṭas found in Bengal. Separate representations of many of them are also known, though some of them were more frequently singly represented than the others. Varāha, Narasiṃha and Vāmana as separate figures are more common than the others, and they had sometimes independent or subsidiary shrines of their own in Vaiṣṇava religious establishments. None of the separate or group representations, however, go back to a period earlier than the Gupta age; the few images of Saṃkarṣaṇa-Balarāma of the Kushan age found in the Mathura region most probably represent his Vīra aspect (cf. the early Bhāgavata concept of the

[1] M. Ganguly, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Museum*, pp. 138-39, pl. XXV.

'Holy Pañcavīras' noted earlier in this book). Some of the Gupta inscriptions either record the construction of independent shrines in honour of some of the Avatāras, or incidentally refer to the myths they illustrate. The Eran Inscription of the time of Toramāṇa engraved on the chest of a colossal red sandstone image of a Boar refers to Viṣṇu who (in his Varāha Avatāra), in the act of lifting up the earth, caused the mountains to tremble with the blows of his hard snout.[1] The Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha Avatāras, as it has been already noted, were originally associated with Brahmā Prajāpati, but with the development of the Bhāgavata (Vaiṣṇava) creed they were transferred to its composite cult-god. In his Fish incarnation, the god rescued the Vedas and the nuclei of the universe from destruction in the deluge, and in his Tortoise incarnation, he supported the mountain Mandāra used by the Devas and Asuras as the churning rod when they churned the ocean. These two incarnations are represented in two ways, either in purely theriomorphic manner or as hybrid forms in which the upper half is human and the lower half, animal. There can be no question of finding any Vaiṣṇava emblems in the purely theriomorphic forms of these two Avatāras. But in their hybrid forms, the human part (upper) invariably holds the usual attributes in the four hands. Among the reliefs found inside a small temple at Pathari (Madhya Pradesh) of the late Gupta period, Beglar recognised all the ten Avatāras except the Fish, the Kūrma Avatāra there characteristically illustrating the story of the churning of the ocean (*A.S.R.* VII, p. 77). The Boar incarnation is represented in several ways, the principal modes being, as in the case of the two preceding ones, theriomorphic and hybrid. But in this case the hybridity lay in the head alone, all the rest of the body being shown as human. The Eran stone boar of the time of Toramāṇa has just been

[1] C.I.I., III, pp. 159-60. The Junagadh Rock Inscription of Skandagupta's time alludes to the Dwarf Incarnation (pp. 58-9). There is a reference to Rāma (Dāśarathi) incarnation in the *Raghuvaṃśa* passage (XIII, I: *Rāmābhidhāno Hari*). An image measuring 120 *aṅgulas* of Dāśarathi Rāma is mentioned in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Ch. 57, 30

mentioned; many such fully theriomorphic figures of the Avatāra have been discovered in different parts of Northern India. In some such images the body of the Varāha is covered with tiny human figures, and the Earth goddess is shown hanging by firmly grasping one of the tusks of the animal. The first feature refers to the myth that Devas, Asuras, Ṛṣis and others took shelter in the body of the Avatāra, while the second one shows that it had just rescued the goddess from the nether regions by its strong tusks. The textual name of the purely animal forms of this incarnation is simply Varāha, while that of its hybrid forms is Nṛ-Varāha. Plate XXV illustrates one of the earliest and most striking forms of the latter carved on the façade of the cave No. 4 at Udayagiri (near Bhilsa, Madhya Bharat). The colossal two-armed Varāha Avatāra treads with his left foot on the coils of Ādiśeṣa having a canopy of the two layers of thirteen snake-hoods (seven in front and six in the intervals behind), his right hand resting on his hip, his left, on his knee; he has just raised Pṛthivī from beneath the waters with his right tusk; the waters of the ocean are represented by long undulating lines on the background of the rock. The much-mutilated kneeling male figure behind Ādiśeṣa has been identified by Cunningham as the King of the Ocean, and a little farther in the right background is a female seen wading through the waters with folded hands (she may be the Ocean Queen). The upper background of the façade is filled with rows of figures among which Cunningham could recognise Brahmā, Śiva and other gods in one row, bearded sages in another and Asuras and heavenly musicians in a third. To the left of this composition (not visible in the reproduction) are carved the river goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā on their respective mounts (*makara* and *kūrma*) with watery lines on all sides, and other figures. The whole composition has been brilliantly planned and very artistically laid out by the master-architect and sculptor of the early Gupta period, and the massive dynamism of the god has been balanced with the quiescent attitude of his numerous attendants and worshippers with consummate skill. A

comparison between the above relief and the two in Badami, about a century and a half later, will show the difference in the treatment of the same motif. The south Indian artists of the early Calukya period introduced more finesse, but this cost them the well-balanced contrast between the forceful energy and calm tranquillity of the Udayagiri relief.[1] The Mahabalipuram composition (7th century A.D.), however, illustrates the same theme in a very touching manner. The god lovingly holds up Pṛthivī with his front two hands and wistfully looks at her with his boar face; there are many attendants shown in different attitudes in the relief. The Pallava artist has taken more care to emphasise the aspect of loving reunion between the god and his divine consort (Pṛthivī) than to lay stress on the forceful physical act of her deliverance by him.[2] Two other types of Varāha-Avatāra, Yajña- and Pralaya-Varāhas, are mentioned by Rao on the authority of the *Vaikhānasāgama;* in the former the god is shown seated in *lalitāsana* on a lion-seat, accompanied by his two consorts Lakṣmī and Bhū, and in the latter sitting in the same pose he is attended only by Bhūdevī.

The Narasiṃha Avatāra, the next in point of order in the stereotyped list of the Daśāvatāras, was always represented in a hybrid form. The name itself, a compound of *nara* (man) and *siṃha* (lion), is the authority for such a form, and as in the Nṛ-Varāha type, the face is only that of an animal (here that of a lion with shaggy manes), all the other parts of the body being human. The story behind the primary form of this incarnatory form of Viṣṇu is well known, and one of the several attributive epithets of the Avatāra, *viz.*, *sthauṇa* (from the word *sthūṇā* meaning a column) is significant. The god came out of a column when it was broken in anger by the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, a great hater of Hari (another name of Viṣṇu). His son, Prahlāda,

1 For the two Badami reliefs, *cf.* R. D. Banerjee, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 25 (*Bas-reliefs of Badami*), pp. 16-17, 36 and plates IX (b) and XVII (b).

2 For the Mahabalipuram relief, *cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pl. XXXVI. For many other Varāha figures of the early and late mediaeval period hailing from different parts of India, *cf. ibid.*, pls. XXXVIII-XLI; R. D. Banerjee, *EISMS.* pls. XLV, Figs b-e; *Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I, pls. LXVII, Fig. 162.

was a great devotee of the god, and Hiraṇyakaśipu, after vain efforts through persuasion and severe persecution to dissuade him from his devotion to Hari, asked him where his god was. Prahlāda answered that he was everywhere, even in the crystal column before them. Hiraṇyakaśipu kicked at it, and out came the god in the peculiar form, felled the demon on his thighs and killed him outright. Many reliefs depicting this theme have been recovered from various parts of India, and a large number of them represent either the combat between the god and the demon or the killing of the latter by the former. The Ellora and Dadikkombu sculptures (Rao, *op. cit.*, Pls. XLIV and XLV) illustrate the former type, while Gharwa, Paikore (Birbhum, Bengal), and many other north and south Indian sculptures in stone and bronze represent the latter. E B. Havell remarks about the Ellora relief: 'The sculptor has chosen the moment when the terrific apparition of the man-lion rushes forth to seize Hiraṇya who, taken unawares and with the mocking taunt still on his lips, makes a desperate effort to defend himself;' he speaks highly about the technical strength and imaginative power manifest in the treatment of the subject (*Indian Sculpture and Painting*, 2nd edition, pp. 53-54, Pl. XXIII). Rao rightly observes about the relief that ' the master touch of the work of the artist may be seen in the way in which the interlocking of the leg of Narasiṃha with that of Hiraṇyakaśipu is carried out.' The *Matsyapurāṇa* seems to describe this sort of image in these words: ' The god and demon should be shown fighting with their legs interlocked; the former should appear as being repeatedly attacked by the tired demon who should be shown as holding a sword and a shield ' (Ch. 260, vv. 34-5).

The Vaiṣṇava devotees, however, do not seem to have been inclined always to depict this aspect of the god in *ugra* or terrific form. Viṣṇu and most of his aspects were preeminently gods of love, and whatever deeds of destruction were associated with him in some of his forms were really acts of grace and deliverance, and these were rarely represented in iconoplastic art. Some images of Narasiṃha

briefly noted above belong to this rare group, and the extracts from *Śilparatna*, *Agnipurāṇa*, *Viṣṇudharmottara* and *Rūpamaṇḍana* quoted by Rao and one from *Matsyapurāṇa* just quoted by me characterise them. But according to the *Vaikhānasāgama* characterisation of Narasiṃha and Kevala Narasiṃha (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. C, pp. 32-33) he is a god of peace, tranquillity and yogic meditation. Such a peaceful Narasiṃha is shown in one of the Gupta terracotta seals (*cf. supra*, p. 192); this sort of Narasiṃha, again is illustrated by the Badami relief (one of the earliest extant images of this Avatāra, Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. XLIII). A four-armed Narasiṃha seated in *sukhāsana* on a lotus holding *cakra*, *gadā* and *śaṅkha* (the front left hand resting on the left knee) with probably Prahlāda in the right corner paying respects to his god is shown carved inside a ' *caitya* window ' niche in the Gupta temple of Deogarh; the tranquil pose of the figure does not fail to attract our attention (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 3). The stone figure of Kevala Narasiṃha from Halebidu (Mysore) depicts the god seated in *utkuṭikāsana*, his slightly raised legs are kept in position by a *yogapaṭṭa* and the fierce-eyed lion-face in the form of a mask ill-suits the whole composition. Lastly, the Madras bronzes of Lakṣmī-Narasiṃha also point out in a characteristic manner how the cult-ideology transformed this apparently fierce aspect of Viṣṇu into a peaceful one shown in the company of his consort.[1]

Vāmana, Viṣṇu's fifth Avatāra, has clear Vedic affiliation, for the whole mythology about it grew out by stages of the Āditya Viṣṇu's attributive epithet of Trivikrama. The *Śatapatha Bṛāhmaṇa* version of the story about the agreement between the Devas and the Asuras during their fight for the overlordship of the universe that the latter would only grant to the former that portion of it which would be covered by the recumbent figure of Viṣṇu belongs to the intermediate stage in its development. It is expressly

[1] For the Kevala Narasiṃha image from Halebidu, *cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pl. XLII; its *prabhāvalī* contains the tiny figures of the Daśāvatāras. For the Madras bronzes, *cf. ibid.*, pl. XLI, Figs. 1 and 3.

laid down there that wnen Viṣṇu, the dwarfest among the gods actually lay down, his body covered the whole of the universe, as he was identical with sacrifice, and the Asuras had to part with it according to the previous stipulation (*Ś. B.*, I. 2, 5, 1ff.). In the Purāṇas and other texts, the whole story was further elaborated, and Virocana's son, Bali, the grandson of Prahlāda (a great devotee of Hari like his grandfather), the Dwarf Brahmacārī, Vāmana, Śukra, the spiritual instructor of the Daityas, and others are introduced to heighten its effect. It should be noted, however, that the Vedic 'three steps' play a prominent part in the developed mythology, for Vāmana asked for only that portion of the earth which he could cover by pacing three steps. When Bali granted this request the dwarf was suddenly transformed into a colossus; covering the whole of the universe with two steps, and placing his third step on the head of his devotee he sent him down to live in the nether regions. The iconographic texts describe the form of the Avatāra, but it is curious that though the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (chapter 57) does not contain any description of the above-named five incarnations, a reference to the image of this devout Hari-bhakta is made there; it is laid down that Virocana's son, Bali (*i.e.*, his image) should measure 120 aṅgulas in height (*Balīśca Vairocaniḥ śataṃ viṃśaṃ*—v. 30).

Sculptures illustrating the Vāmana incarnation fall under two categories, one the dwarf (Vāmana), and the other the huge colossus (Virāṭarūpa) about to take three steps (Trivikrama). The texts enjoin that Vāmana should be Pañcatāla in measurement, two-armed, holding an umbrella and a staff, and should appear as a teen-aged Brahmacārin, while the Trivikrama Virāṭarūpa should be four-, or eight-armed with right or left foot firmly planted, the other leg thrown upwards as if to attack the heavens. The *Vaikhānasāgama* elaborately describes the latter form, and mentions the names of a large number of accessory figures making up the whole composition; the *cauri*-bearing Vāyu and Varuṇa, Sūrya and Candra, Sanaka and

Sanatkumāra, Brahmā washing the upraised foot of Trivikrama, Gaṅgā, Namuci and other demons, Jāmbavān playing on a drum, Garuḍa, lastly Bali with his wife Vindhyābalī granting the land to Vāmana. The Mahābalipur relief reproduced by Rao (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. XLIX) closely follows the description given above, though the scene of the actual granting of the land is not depicted. The Badami relief also, though it does not contain many of the accessory figures present in the other, illustrates this scene. Vāmana holding an umbrella in his hand is shown here as about to receive the grant from the Daitya King accompanied by his consort and other attendants. The firmly planted right leg of Trivikrama is clasped by a royal figure (perhaps Bali himself shown for the second time); the Viṣṇuganas are shown playing on musical instruments in the lower panel (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 4). Both the Badami and the Mahabalipur figures of Trivikrama are eight-armed. In some Trivikrama reliefs a grinning face is shown just near the upraised leg of the god; R. D. Banerjee has correctly identified it as standing for the demon Rāhu who is represented in mediaeval art in this manner. Separate figures of Vāmana are very rare, and such figures are almost always four-armed, the four hands holding the usual Vaiṣṇava emblems. The well-carved pot-bellied four-armed figure of the dwarf god reproduced here is thus very interesting. It is in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta, and it belongs to c. 11th century A.D.; the god is attended by the two divine consorts (Śrī and Puṣṭī), as in the Para and Vyūha types of Viṣṇu images (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 1).

The next three incarnations, the human ones, are three Rāmas—Bhārgava Rāma (Paraśurāma), Rāghava Rāma and Balarāma. The mythology associated with the first clearly points out that he was the symbol of the militancy of the Brahmans against the Kṣatriyas. He is said to have destroyed the Kṣatriyas as many as 21 times, but in spite of all this the Avatārahood appertained to him only for a time, he being really an Āveśāvatāra ('possessed'

temporarily by Viṣṇu). The Avatārahood left him as soon as Rāghava Rāma, son of Daśaratha, the Kṣatriya King of Ayodhyā, appeared on the scene, and it passed to the latter. Dāśarathi Rāma's story is well known; it appealed to the imagination of the people of India of all parts and all ages, for he typified the Indian ideal of manhood. Something has already been said about Balarāma in connection with his Vīra and Vyūha aspects, but he had also an honoured place in the list of the Vibhavas. A confusion of ideas about his exact identity, however, remained in the minds of the Indian myth-makers, for different texts present him in different forms. In one form he is a sort of a bucolic deity connected with agriculture and harvests, in another he is the incarnation of Ananta Nāga, a companion (Pārṣada) of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, and last, though not the least, he was the elder brother of Vāsudeva himself in which character he was first a Vīra and then a Vyūha. Again, in the list of the ten incarnations his place is sometimes, though rarely, occupied by Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa himself, the fountain-head of the cult.

There are not many variations in the iconographic types of these human incarnations. Paraśurāma, as this form of his name indicates, should hold a battle-axe (*paraśu*) in his right hand, and in the Daśāvatāra slabs he is invariably shown as two-armed. Some texts, however, describe a four-armed variety of his image; such images are separate representations, and are extremely rare. Thus, the four-armed image of this Avatāra from Ranihati (Dacca) is of unique interest and importance; its front right hand holds a battle-axe, the remaining hands holding a *śaṅkha*, a *cakra* and a *gadā*. The *Agnipurāna* seems to describe a four-armed image of this incarnation, though the attributes named are a bow, an arrow, a sword and a battle-axe (ch. 49, v. 5). Images of Dāśarathi Rāma are usually devoid of any complexities. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* does not find it necessary to describe his image in detail, but simply says that, 'Rāma, the son of Daśaratha (*i.e.* his image) should be 120 aṅgulas in height (ch. 57, v. 30).

Though the Gupta inscriptions do not refer to Rāma incarnation, reliefs illustrating episodes of Rāma's story and belonging to the Gupta period are still extant[1]. In the Daśāvatāra reliefs of the early and late mediaeval periods, Rāma is almost invariably depicted as two-armed, his hands holding a bow and an arrow. Separate cult images of him in stone and bronze of a comparatively late period are known; in these he is usually shown accompanied by his queen Sītā, his devoted brother Lakṣmaṇa and his faithful ape servant Hanumān. Scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* are very frequently found illustrated in the early and late mediaeval temple walls not only in India, but also in Indo-China and Indonesia.

The life-history of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma is fully told in the *Harivaṃśa* (a *Mahābhārata* supplement), in the *Bhāgavata* and other Purāṇas and in many other texts. In a sense they are the real Avatāras, for according to the epic and Purāṇic tradition they came to live among men for the attainment of virtuous ends. The *Matsyapurāṇa* expressly places Kṛṣṇa in the role of an Avatāra when it says that 'the placing of a *gadā* in the left hand (of Viṣṇu) in his Kṛṣṇa Avatāra is meritorious' (ch. 258, v. 10—*Kṛṣṇāvatāre tu gadā vāmahaste praśasyate*). The stories connected with the childhood and youthful days of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were already well known in the early centuries of the Christian era. One of the oldest representations of the story of Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī is to be found on a fragmentary relief of the second or third century A.D. in the collection of the Mathura Museum (No. 1344). It shows Vāsudeva fording the Yamunā with new-born Kṛṣṇa in his hand to exchange him for safety with the just-born daughter of Nanda and Yaśodā (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1925-26, pp. 183-4 and plate). A series of reliefs carved on two partially preserved door-jambs found at Mandor (Māṇḍavyapura, the ancient capital of

[1] *Cf.* the platform panels of the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogarh, which can be identified as 'Chastisement of Śūrpanakhā by Lakṣmaṇa' and 'Curbing of Paraśurāma's pride by Rāma': *A.S.R.*, Vol. X, pp. 108-09; *Ost. Zeit*, 1914, pp.16-7, fig. 19; *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XIV, p. 13.

Marwar) were identified by D. R. Bhandarkar to illustrate the following Kṛṣṇāyaṇa scenes: (1) the uplifting of the Govardhana mountain by Kṛṣṇa; (2) Kṛṣṇa stealing butter; (3) infant Kṛṣṇa upturning the cart with his tiny legs; (4) the slaying of the ass-demon Dhenuka by Balarāma, and (5) the subjugation of Nāga Kāliya by Kṛṣṇa. The date of the sculpture has been fixed by Bhandarkar in the 4th century A.D. (*Ibid*, 1905-06, pp. 135-40 and figures). Pl. XXVI, Fig. 1, illustraes a Deogarh relief in which Nanda and Yaśodā, the adoptive cowherd parents of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, are standing side by side and caressing the infants in their rural surroundings; the cows in the background (not very clear in the reproduction) emphasise the pastoral character of the scene. The dress of the cowherd chief and his wife is to be noted; Yaśodā wears a long skirt with a flowing veil covering her head and shoulders. The garment is characteristically foreign with a slight touch of late Gandhāra element in it, and tradition records that these cowherds of Mathura and its environs belonged to the Ābhīra stock. M. S. Vats notices many such Kṛṣṇāyaṇa scenes carved on the Deogarh temple walls and illustrates some of them (*M.A.S.I.*, No. 70, pp. 18 ff., 33, and Plates). R. D. Banerjee identified various such scenes in the numerous friezes carved on caves II and IV at Badami; some Paharpur basement reliefs also contain these scenes. The sculptures on some mediaeval Vaiṣṇava shrines at Tripurī (modern Tewar in Madhya Pradesh), and the late mediaeval temple carvings of various other parts of India illustrate these Kṛṣṇāyaṇa as well as Rāmāyaṇa scenes. Separate sculptures of Kṛṣṇa are also known from comparatively early times. The favourite themes which are illustrated by them are those of Kṛṣṇa uplifting the mountain Govardhana, Kṛṣṇa accompanied by his two favourite consorts (Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā), etc.; reliefs belonging to late mediaeval and modern periods illustrate the cowherd (Gopāla) Kṛṣṇa's dalliance with the cowherdesses (Gopīs), the chief among whom was Rādhā. The theme of the divine acts of love was emphasised in many of them, and some outstanding works of art were produced

in wood, stone and paint. Pl. XXVII, Fig. 2, illustrates a beautiful wooden figure of Veṇu-Gopāla (Kṛṣṇa playing on a bamboo flute) in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta, recovered from Kansat (Malda district). This 17th century wooden figure is an exquisite piece of art and shows remarkable skill in graceful modelling.[1]

Balarāma's importance in the cult is proved by literary as well as archaeological data. The *Mahābhāṣya* refers to the temple of Dhanapati, Rāma and Keśava, and Rāma in this context is no other than Balarāma. Patañjali, while commenting on Sūtra, II. 2, 23, says, ' may the power of Kṛṣṇa, second to Saṃkarṣaṇa, increase '; Saṃkarṣaṇa, the same as Balarāma, is evidently the first of the Vīras in this passage. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* allots one couplet to the description of his image; it lays down that ' Baladeva should be shown with a ploughshare in his hand, and his eyes should be round and rolling indicating his inebriety; he should wear only one ear-ring and his body should be white like a conch-shell, moon or a (white) lotus ' (Ch. 57, V. 36). Two- or four-armed varieties are described in later iconographic texts in which the canopy of snakehoods and the ploughshare in one of the hands are almost invariably mentioned. These texts, however, describe the Vibhava Saṃkarṣaṇa, for the Vyūha Saṃkarṣaṇa should, according to the texts, hold the emblems of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu in his four hands in the prescribed order. One of the earliest Brahmanical images is of this god; it was found at Mathura, and it is now in the collection of the Lucknow Museum. The god stands under a canopy of serpenthoods, holds a pestle (*muṣala*) and a ploughshare (*hala*) in his hands, wears a short *dhoti*, usual ornaments and a massive turban; the right leg is slightly bent at the knee as in some of the early Yakṣa statues (Pl. XXII, Fig. 4). V. S. Agrawala remarks about it that ' the image cannot be later than the second century B.C., and must be regarded as the earliest representation of any

1 For lack of space, it is not possible to go into greater details about *Kṛṣṇāyaṇa* scenes; readers are referred to *J.I.S.O.A.*, XIV, pp. 18-20.

Brahmanical deity in the whole field of Hindu Iconography.[1] A figure of Balarāma, somewhat similar to the above, was discovered at Tumain (Gwalior, Madhya Bharat), and is now in the Gwalior Museum. A very striking exhibit in the same museum is the Fan Palm Capital (Tāladhvaja) which is the special cognisance of this god; it is of about the first century A.D. A bunch of palm-leaves are very realistically depicted; but what is of particular interest in this sculpture is the headless figure of a donkey which evidently is the ass-demon Dhenuka killed by Balarāma by hurling it against a fan-palm tree (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 3).[2]

The last two incarnatory forms of Viṣṇu are seldom, if at all, represented separately. Buddha is sometimes, though rarely, omitted in south Indian Daśāvatāra reliefs, his place being occupied by Kṛṣṇa. The exponents of Brahmanical Hinduism reviled, in no uncertain terms, the religious system centering round the great reformer, but could not ignore him altogether. The Bhāgavatas came to regard him as one of the incarnations of their god who, according to them, incarnated himself in the world as Māyāmoha (' The arch Deluder ') to create confusion among the Daityas by preaching false and anti-Vedic doctrines among them and thus cause their destruction. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* describes his image in this manner: ' Buddha should have the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet marked with lotus, he should be placid in form and his hair should be very short (*sunīca*; a variant reading is *sunīta* meaning "well-arranged"—both readings would suit a Buddha image): he should be seated on a lotus

J.I.S.O.A., 1937, p. 126, pl. XIV, fig. 4. The image may, however, be dated in the 1st century B.C.

[2] Another Tāladhvaja of about the same date is in the collection of the Lucknow Museum; it has been inaccurately described in the Museum Guide-Book to the Archaeological section as Cocoanut capital (p. 6). D. R. Bhandarkar discovered an earlier specimen at Besnagar along with the Garuḍa and Makara capitals there; they belong to the 1st century B.C., if not earlier. The fermented juice of the fan-palm tree is intoxicating, and the association of the ever-inebriate Saṃkarṣaṇa (the *Mahābhārata* describes him as *kṣīva*, *i.e.*, ' drunken ') with it is very appropriate.

For descriptions of several other very characteristic separate types of Balarāma images of the mediaeval period *cf. J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XIV, 1946, pp. 24-8; in the Daśāvatāra reliefs, he is invariably two-armed.

seat and should appear as the father of the whole world ' (Ch. 57, V. 44). The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* curiously, however, describes Māyāmoha as ' naked with shaved head and a peacock tail in his hand ' (*digambaro muṇḍo barhipatradharaḥ*); the author seems to have made a wilful confusion between the Jina of the Digambara Jainas (Nagna-Kṣapaṇakas) and the Buddha of the Buddhists, both the order being described in the Purāṇas as *Nagnas* (' Naked ones ') on account of their having discarded the authority of the Vedas. The *Agnipurāṇa* description of the Buddha figure contains most of the essential iconographic features to which the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* adds a few more details. In the Daśāvatāra slabs, Buddha is almost invariably shown standing, with his right hand in the assurance pose.

Viṣṇu is yet to incarnate himself in the end of the Kali Yuga (as he appeared in the end of the Dvāpara Yuga for the establishment of righteousness and virtue) as Kalkin, the son of the Brahman Viṣṇuyaśa, and to restore virtue and Varṇāśramadharma in this world with the help of his priest, the great sage Yājñavalkya, after destroying the Mlecchas. Two varieties of his image are described in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* and in the *Agnipurāṇa*, one two-armed and the other four-armed. The two-armed variety described in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* as ' a powerful man angry in mood, riding on horseback with a sword in his raised hand ' (*Khaḍgodyatakaraḥ kruddho hayārūḍho mahābalaḥ*) can be recognised in the last figure of the Daśāvatāra slabs. Separate figures of the Avatāra are not known, and some mediaeval reliefs of Eastern India showing a two-armed deity riding on a horse accompanied by a number of attendants were wrongly identified as Kalkī; B. B. Bidyavinod correctly identified these figures as those of Revanta, the son of Sūrya (*J.A.S.B.*, 1909, p. 391).

It will not be posible for me to give here an iconographic account of all the other aspects and incarnatory forms of Viṣṇu for want of space. I have dealt with the topic at full length in my article on Viṣṇu (III) in the *Journal of the Indian*

Society of Oriental Art, Vol. XIV (pages 35ff.). Garuḍa and Āyudhapuruṣas described there at some length will be briefly studied in the last chapter of this book. I shall only refer here to three of the aspects of Viṣṇu, reliefs illustrating which are reproduced here. Pl. XXVI, Fig. 2, illustrates the twenty-armed relief in the collection of the V. R. S. Museum (No. 1492), Rajshahi, which, though partly corresponding to the *Rūpamaṇḍana* description of the Viśvarūpa aspect of Viṣṇu, differs a great deal from it. It is not a four-faced figure as the text enjoins, and it contains a feature indicative of cult syncretism about which there is no mention in the *Rūpamaṇḍana*. The twenty-armed deity wearing the *vanamālā* and other usual ornaments stands in the *samapādasthānaka* pose, his hands holding various emblems among which the Vaiṣṇava ones *par excellence* can be recognised. The image, no doubt, tries to illustrate, though in a very imperfect way, the ideology underlying the Viśvarūpa aspect of Kṛṣṇa so beautifully described in the eleventh canto of the *Bhagavadgītā;* but the two miniature figures seated on double-petalled lotuses in *lalitāsana* on either side of the central figure clearly remind us of the four miniature replicas and attendants of the Arapacana form of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva. The sculpture may be dated in the 11th century A.D. The other relief (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 1) belongs to a far earlier period, for it is one of the Pārśvadevatās in the Gupta temple at Deogarh (the other two being Śeṣaśayana and Nara-Nārāyaṇa aspects of Viṣṇu). It illustrates the Kari-varada aspect of Viṣṇu, in which the Lord delivered Gajendra, the King of the elephants, from the clutches of an aquatic monster (Gajendra-mokṣa). The whole story is beautifully narrated in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (Bk. VIII, Chs. 2-4): Gajendra sporting in a lake with his wives had his legs caught by a *grāha*, and unable to rid himself of the aquatic monster, he began to offer fervent prayers to Viṣṇu; in the end the Lord appeared before him and delivered him. Viṣṇu is shown astride on his mount flying in the air; in the waters below, the Nāga King and Queen (Ādiśeṣa and his consort?) are present in an attitude of deep

adoration; the king of the elephants with his legs encircled by the coils of the *grāha* (it seems to have been a snake, for the coils are serpentine) offers flowers and prayers to the Lord with his upraised trunk; flying couples of Vidyādharas are holding a jewelled crown over Viṣṇu's head. The third relief (Pl. VIII, Fig. 8) hails from Amaravati, and illustrates Māndhātā, the first paramount sovereign (*Rāja Cakravartī*) according to the epic and Purāṇic tradition. The suzerain ruler stands with his right hand upraised as if to give assurance to his numerous subjects; he holds the jewel (*maṇi*) in his left hand, and the six other jewels (in all seven jewels, *sapta ratnāni*), *viz.*, wheel (*cakra*), queen consort (*strī*), horse (*aśva*), elephant (*hastī*), chancellor (*gṛhapati*) and commander-in-chief (*parināyaka*) cluster round him. The royal umbrella (*chatra*, the Indian insignia *par excellence* for paramountcy, such a sovereign is called Chatrapati) is placed over his head. It may be noted that early texts characterise a Raja Cakravartin as the possessor of the 'seven jewels'. Māndhātā in the Amaravati relief may not have any particular association with Viṣṇu; but the Indian idea about the divine origin and character of the sovereign ruler was present there all the time, and the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* list of 22 incarnations of Viṣṇu (already noted) contains the name of Pṛthu, and a still earlier list in the *Matsyapurāṇa* (Ch. 47, V. 106) includes Māndhātā in the list of the Avatāras of the god.

Surya

Sūrya, the visible celestial luminary, was being worshipped in India from very early times. The Vedas refer to him and his various aspects as Savitṛ, Puṣan, Bhaga, Vivasvat, Mitra, Aryaman and Viṣṇu. Sūrya was the most concrete of the solar deities, and Savitṛ, ' the stimulator of everything ' (*sarvasya prasavitā-Nirukta*, 10, 31) denoted his abstract qualities. Puṣan seems to have signified ' the beneficent power of the sun manifested chiefly as a pastoral deity '. Bhaga's association with the sun is not very clear, but according to Yāska, he is the presiding deity of the forenoon; the hymns also refer to him as ' a distributor of wealth '. Vivasvat, perhaps originally representing the rising sun, was regarded by the hymnists as the first sacrificer, the ancestor of the human race; his Avestan counterpart, Vivanhant, was the first mortal that prepared Haoma (Vedic Soma). Mitra was an Indo-Iranian god, and it will be shown afterwards how the Iranian form of his cult reacted on north Indian sun-worship. Aryaman, also an Indo-Iranian deity, was a less defined aspect of Sūrya, and had very few individual traits. Viṣnu was the most interesting of the solar deities, and the part he played in the development of the Bhāgavata creed has already been delineated in the first part of this chapter. Most of these deities, along with a few others like Aṃśa, Dakṣa, Mārtāṇḍa, etc., came to constitute, in different groupings and different contexts, the class of gods called Ādityas. Their number, indefinite in the early Vedic texts, was later fixed as twelve. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* once enumerates them as eight including Mārtāṇḍa, but raises their number to twelve in two other passages, identifying them in this context with the twelve months. The epic and Purāṇic literature sticks to the number. Some texts name them as Dhātṛ, Mitra, Aryaman, Rudra, Varuṇa, Sūrya, Bhaga, Vivasvan, Pusan,

Savitā, Tvaṣṭā and Viṣṇu. The list of these names is, however, not uniform, though some of them are common in different texts. It should be noted that not only the names of the Vedic Ādityas are incorporated here, but those of the Vedic prototypes of the later Brahmanical triad, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva (Dhātā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) are also included in it. The worship of the twelve Ādityas along with that of the nine so-called planets or Navagrahas came to occupy a very important place in the religious life of the Indians. The Navagrahas are Ravi (Sun), Soma (Moon), Maṅgala (Mars), Budha (Mercury), Bṛhaspati (Jupiter), Śukra (Venus), Śani (Saturn), Rāhu and Ketu (the ascending and descending nodes of the moon); barring the first two and the last two, the rest are planets. The Navagrahas were worshipped by all in times of danger according to the *grahayāga* or *svastyayana vidhi*, for the troubles were regarded as originating from the anger of these gods. This is still the custom among the believing Hindus of India.

Ṛgvedic hymns to Sūrya contain many epithets which had a hand in influencing many of his traits in the post-Vedic age. In some he is described as ' the beautiful-winged celestial bird Garutmān ' (*divya suparṇa Garutmān*) while in one verse (*R.V.*, VII, 77, 3) he is described as ' a white brilliant steed brought by Uṣas '; from such descriptions originated the concept of Garuḍa, the mount of Viṣṇu, and Tārkṣya, the horse-mount of the Sun-god himself. Nay, the idea of the god riding on a chariot drawn by four or seven horses so frequently found in post-Vedic texts and illustrated in early reliefs has already been well formulated in Ṛgvedic hymns; he is more often described there as ' moving on a car drawn by one, by several or by seven fleet and ruddy horses ' (I. 115, 3-4; VII. 60, 3; VII. 63, 2, etc.). The elaborate story current in the epics and the Purāṇas about Sūrya's marriage with Viśvakarmā's daughter Saṃjñā, her desertion of him after leaving with him her shadow (Chāyā) for her inability to bear his effulgence, Viśvakarmā's attempt to reduce this in order that his daughter might endure it, had its origin in the Vedic myth about the marriage

of Saraṇyu, the daughter of Tvaṣṭar, with Vivasvat, the Sun-god.[1]

The worship of the Sun-god and his various aspects continued in the later Vedic period. In the post-Vedic age it was more advanced, and the two epics are full of allusions to Sūrya and his various aspects; one passage in the *Mahābhārata* (II. 50, 16) describes him as Deveśvara, ' lord of gods' (*bhāsi divi deveśvaro yathā*). Many other Sanskrit works of a general character belonging to the Gupta period and afterwards, also contain similar references. All these facts presuppose the existence of a school of sun-worshippers, known as the Sauras. They believed that the sun was the supreme soul, the creator of the universe; they cited textual authority in support of their belief both from the Śrutis and the Smṛtis (cf. the *Ṛgveda* passage : *Sūrya ātmā jagatastasthūṣaśca*, ' the sun is the soul of movable and immovable things ', I. 115, 1). Six classes of sun-worshippers are mentioned by Ānandagiri who says that all of them bore *nāmam* (caste-mark) made of red sandal paste, wore garlands of red flowers and repeated the *Sūrya gāyatrī* of eight syllables. Mayūra-*bhaṭṭa*, a poet of the early mediaeval times, extolled the glory of the Sun-god in a poem consisting of one hundred verses, known by the name of *Sūryaśataka*, which was held in great esteem. The cult of the sun-worshippers seems to have had its adherents in north and south India in the early periods.

From the early centuries of the Christian era the sun cult appears to have developed in Northern India along a certain well-marked line. That its north Indian form was much reorientated by the east Iranian mode of sun-worship is fully proved by many literary and archaeological data. The story of Śāmba's leprosy and his cure from this fell disease by his worship of the Sun-god according to the approved east-Iranian (Śakadvīpī) manner is elaborately narrated in many Purāṇas such as *Bhaviṣya*, *Varāha*, *Śāmba*, etc.

[1] The Vedic myth seems to have started from a *Brahmodya* (a riddle or a charade) passage in the *Ṛgveda* (I. 164); for Bloomfield's observations on such *Ṛgvedic* passages, *cf. J.A.O.S.*, Vol. 15, 1893, pp. 172-88.

Reference is also made in many of these texts to his having caused to be built a big temple of the god at Mūlasthānapura (modern Multan in the West Punjab) on the banks of the Candrabhāgā. There was actually a big sun temple at Multan, a graphic description of which and the image enshrined there is given by foreign travellers like Hiuen Tsang and Arab geographers like Al Edrisi, Abu Ishak al Ishtakhri and others. Some of the Purāṇas also refer to the installation of a sun image known by the name of Śāmbāditya by Śāmba at Mathura. The close association of the east Iranian form of sun-worship with the re-orientated cult of the god in Northern India is further emphasised in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; it is expressly laid down there (Ch. 59, V. 19) that it was the Magas (the indianised form of the Magi, the sun-worshipping priests of Iran) who were entitled to instal ceremonially the images of Sūrya in temples. Alberuni knew this fact for he has recorded that the ancient Persian priests came to India and became known as Magas. Remains of the mediaeval temples of the Sun god are still extant in the extreme west (Modhera in Gujrat), the extreme east (Konarak in Orissa), and inscriptional references to the existences of such shrines of a far earlier period in several other parts of Northern India have been found.[1] That some of the ancient rulers of India were exclusive worshippers of the Sun god is also proved by epigraphic data; Mahārāja Dharapaṭṭa, one of the Maitrāka rulers of Valabhī, and some of the Pushyabhūti rulers of Thāneśvwar like Rājyavardhana, Ādityavardhana and Prabhākaravardhana, were Param-Ādityabhaktas (' the most devout worshippers of the sun ').

[1] The Indor copper-plate Inscription of the time of Skandagupta refers to a temple of the Sun at Indrapura (old name of Indor in Bulandshahr District, U.P.); a still earlier temple of the god built by a guild of silk-weavers during the time of Skanda's father at Daśapura (old name of Mandasor in the Western Malwa division of Madhya Bharat) is referred to in the Mandasor stone Inscription of Kumāragupta I and Bandhuvarman. The Gwalior Stone Inscription of Mihirakula, the Huṇa chief, records the building of a sun temple at Gopādri (Gwalior hill) by one Mātṛceṭa; the Deo-Baranark Inscription of the time of Jīvitagupta II (one of the later Gupta rulers of Magadha) also refers to an existing sun temple about 25 miles south-west of Arrah in the Shahabad district of Bihar (*C.I.I.*, III, pp. 70, 80, 162, 218).

There is little doubt that the particular form of sun-worship alluded to by the aforesaid archaeological data was the re-orientated sun cult described above. This form of cult does not seem to have been in vogue in the south, though sun images and temples of the mediaeval period have been found there; but it will be presently shown that mediaeval sun icons of the south differed much from their north Indian counterparts.

Sun was being represented in Indian art by means of various symbols before the inception and development of any cult centering round him. These symbols were made use of by the Vedic ritualists in the performance of sacrifices. A wheel, a round golden plate, a lotus flower, etc., were commonly used on these occasions. It has already been demonstrated in Chapter IV that some of the earliest remains of India of the historic period, the punch-marked and cast coins, contain the representations of these objects. The coins of the Uddehika and the Pañcāla Mitra chiefs like Sūryamitra and Bhānumitra bear on their reverse side the solar disc placed on a pedestal. Sūrya in human form was not also very late in making his appearance in Indian art, though such figures of his are almost invariably associated with non-Brahmanical cults. The god is seen riding on a one-wheeled (*ekacakra*) chariot drawn by four horses on an ' upright ' of the old stone railing (*prācīnaśilāprākāra*) at Bodh Gaya. He is attended on either side by a female figure shooting an arrow, and they are the earliest reliefs standing for Ūṣā and Pratyūṣā personifying the different aspects of ' dawn ' driving away darkness; the demons of darkness appear to be personified by one male bust on each side of the relief. The Ṛgvedic description of Sūrya as riding a chariot drawn by one, three, four or seven horses seems to have been the basis of such representations. The Buddhist cave at Bhaja bears on the left side of its facade a royal figure who is shown riding in the company of two women in a chariot; its wheels pass over grossly proportioned nude demons seeming to float downwards in the air. Burgess identified the relief long ago as ' Sūrya driving through the sky with his attendants and destroying the evil powers of darkness.'[1] These two reliefs of the 1st century B.C. hailing from widely distant regions of India have some affinity with the 2nd century A.D. composition of Sūrya carved on one face of the many-sided column found at Lala Bhagat already partially described in Chapter III (*supra*, pp. 105-06). The Sun god rides here also on a four horse chariot with one wheel, the horses springing up, as it were, from the head of a demon (the demon of darkness? or it may be Rāhu); there is an umbrella with a long staff held aloft on one side of the head of the god by the female attendant on his left, the one on his right probably holding a *cauri;* two or three well-dressed female figures are shown below standing at ease over a group of uncouth nude dwarfs reminding us of the demons of the Bhaja relief (Pl. XXIX, Fig. 1; the malformed dwarfs have not come out in the plate). Reference may also be made in this connection to the Sūrya relief in the torus frieze of the small cave, Anantagumpha (c. 1st century A.D.) among the Khandagiri group of Jaina cave shrines near Bhuvanesvar in Orissa. Here also we find a more or less similar composition, and its affinity with the Lala Bhagat sun motif is specially marked in the presence by its side of the figures of the goddess Śrī and the disporting elephant also present in the latter (not shown in the plate). These early reliefs of Sūrya hailing from different corners of India, Western, Northern and Eastern, seem to prove that the iconography of this motif was to a great extent the same everywhere in these widely distant regions, and it was utilised by devotees irrespective of creeds. This motif was shortly to be remodelled in Northern India in a peculiar way due to the reorientation of the sun cult indicated above.

Several extant art-motifs of the Gandhāra region, and especially those hailing from Mathura and belonging to the early centuries of the Christian era, help us to trace the development of the new and re-orientated Sūrya icons of the

[1] E. H. Johnston is of opinion that the scene illustrates the story of the war between Śakra and the Asuras as told in the *Saṃyuktanikāya; J.I.S.O.A.*, VII, 1939, pp. 1-7, pls. i and ii.

Gupta and post-Gupta periods. A small figure of Sūrya in black slate found in one of the sites of Gandhāra shows the god seated at ease on a chariot drawn by four horses; the sculpture being in an indifferent state of preservation many of the details are lost. But enough remains to show that the god wears boots, is attended by a female figure on either side (the one on the right is broken), and a bearded Atlantos crouches beneath the chariot reminding one of the 'demons' of the afore-said compositions (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 3). The artist of Gandhāra seems to have been well informed about the earlier mode but he introduced some innovations in conformity with the local convention and with the needs of the transformed cult. The sculptors of Mathura, on the other hand, were turning out at about the same time from their atelier numbers of images of a peculiar character, some of which were undoubtedly of the Sun god.[1] One of the earliest such figures (No. D.46 in the Mathura Museum) shows the god sitting on his haunches inside a one-wheeled car drawn by four horses, holding probably a lotus bud in his right hand and a short sword in his left; he is dressed in heavy tunic, and there are traces of top-boots in his partially visible legs; he has the sun-disc or nimbus behind his head and a pair of short wings are attached to his shoulders. The wings distinctly emphasise the early Vedic concept of the sun-bird, and are seldom found attached to the figures of Sūrya; but there was no necessity for doing so in later art, for the sun-bird was transformed into Garuḍa, the bird-mount of Viṣṇu. This Mathura relief also ingeniously shows how at such an early date (1st or 2nd century A.D.) the indigenous and foreign elements were blended together in the evolution of the cult icon. Exhibit No. 894 of the same period in the Mathura Museum shows the Sun god holding a dagger and wearing boots, long coat and trousers, but without wings. Such motifs persisted up to the early

[1] Some of them may represent Śāmba, the traditional usherer of the east-Iranian sun cult in India, while others may stand for Kushan chiefs; *cf. J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 42-3, and XVI, p. 60.

or even late Gupta times in parts of Northern India; they were gradually Indianised and transformed into the approved varieties of the early and late mediaeval sun icons of the region.[1]

The extant Sūrya images of the early Gupta period, though not many in number, seldom fail to show most of the alien features already mentioned; but the gradual idealisation of these traits and preponderance of Indian elements had already begun from the Gupta period. The Niyamatpur and Kumarpur (Rajshahi, Bengal), as well as Bhumara (Nagod, Madhya Bharat) Sūrya reliefs bear a remarkable affinity to the Kushan Sūrya figures of Mathura as regards their dress and general characteristics; they are, however, all shown standing, and the chariot is absent. But the attendant figures of Daṇḍī and Piṅgala (also known by other names some of which like Srausha are foreign or rather Iranian) wearing alien dress and holding such objects as a long staff, a lotus, or a pen and inkpot are seldom absent, and the god usually holds two lotus blossoms by their stalks. One such cult icon of the early Gupta age, practically fully in the round, hailing from Mathura, shows a novel feature; it holds in its two hands the two ends of a flower garland decorating the middle part of the body. The main figure as well as the two attendants wear boots and a long coat, the one on the left being damaged; the horses and chariot are absent (Pl. XXIX, Fig. 3). The fine marble sculpture of Sūrya seated on a chariot the horses of which are being driven by Aruṇa shows the god attended by a bearded figure (the pen and inkpot bearing Kuṇḍī or Piṅgala of the Indian texts) on his right and one holding a long staff (Daṇḍī) on his left. This Gupta sculpture was found at Khair Khaneh (Afghanistan) and is now in the Kabul Museum (*J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XVI, Pl. XIV, 2). The bluish basalt stone image of Sūrya found at Deora (Bogra), and now in the Rajshahi Museum shows further develop-

[1] Some of the foreign elements so prominent in such motifs of the early period have been commented on interestingly by V. S. Agrawala; *Handbook of the Sculptures in the Curzon Museum of Archaeology, Muttra*, p. 52.

ment of the iconic type. It is of the late Gupta period; so also is the Bhumara relief, but it contains far more elaborations than the latter. The number of attendants has increased, for besides Daṇḍī and Piṅgala, the charioteer Aruṇa driving the seven horses, the arrow-shooting goddesses Ūṣā and Pratyūṣā (we have seen them in the Bodh Gaya relief) are present; the god wears a flat *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* and other ornaments, is clad in a *dhoti* tied round the waist by a girdle clasped in front; a short sword hangs by his left side. The boots on his legs are only partially visible, for much of the latter is inserted into the *tri-ratha* chariot pedestal as we find in the 8th century A.D. sun relief from Ellora; he has a circular halo round his head, and holds lotus-stalks with sprouting bunches of flowers in his two hands. The Kushan dress has no doubt disappeared, but the sacred thread on the body of the god, his consorts like Mahāśvetā, Rājñī, Nikṣubhā, Suvarcasā, etc., almost invariably present in such reliefs of the Pāla period, have not yet made their appearance. The Kashipur (24 Perganas, Bengal) Sūrya in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, though similar to the Deora Sūrya in its general outline, and approximately of the same age, bears lesser details. Aruna and probably the arrow-shooting goddesses (broken away) are the only companions of the god; the one-wheeled chariot is clearly outlined, and the way in which the horses are treated and the two ' demons of darkness ' are shown beneath the chariot reminds us of the earlier technique (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 4).[1]

Before the developed iconography of a few more Sūrya reliefs of the mediaeval period is discussed, it is necessary to analyse some of the special traits of the earlier sun icons of Northern India on the basis, of relevant iconographic texts. One of the earliest descriptions of such Sūrya

[1] For the Deora relief, *cf Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I., pp. 456-57. A fine bronze or octo-alloy figure of Sūrya of the early mediaeval period found at Chauddagram (Tippera, Bengal) and now in the Dacca Museum, follows the Deora composition in many of its details, though the god is shown seated here; *cf.* N. K. Bhattasali, *op. cit.*, p. 172 and pl. LIX.

images is to be found in Chapter 57 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*. The verses (46-8) specially enjoin that ' the god should be dressed in the fashion of a Northerner, (his body) from the feet up to the breast being covered. He should wear a crown and hold two lotus flowers by their stalks. His face should be adorned with ear-rings, he should wear a long necklace and a *viyaṅga*;.....his face should be covered with a cheek plate.' It should be noted that the text does not say anything about the chariot, the horses and other attendants of the god. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* of a later date containing fuller details, says that the god should have four arms; he should be covered with a coat of mail and he should wear a Northerner's dress; his waist girdle is known as *yāvīyāṅga* (*avyaṅga*); the staff-carrying Daṇḍī is to be shown on his left, and the pen and inkpot (here palm leaf) bearing Kuṇḍī on his right; a lion standard is to be placed on Sūrya's right side, and his four sons, Revanta, Yama, and the two Manus, should stand by him. Other attendants of the deity according to this elaborate description are his four wives, Rājñī, Ri- (Ni-) kṣubhā, Chāyā and the goddess Suvarcasā; the chariot drawn by seven horses should be driven by Aruṇa.' This elaborate description of the sun image with his accessories may be profitably compared with similar descriptions given in north Indian and south Indian texts. The former group of texts usually lays stress on the close covering of the god's body and his wearing the *avyaṅga* and the boots (*upānat*, some such late texts describe the sun as *upānat-pinaddha pādayugalam*), and there can be no doubt that writers of such texts emphasise in this way the foreign origin of this type of sun cult introduced into India in the beginning of the Christian era or even earlier. The *udīcyaveśa* or the Northerner's dress comprises the close covering of the body and the ' boots ' of not only Sūrya himself but also of some of his male and female attendants. The *avyaṅga* is the Indianised form of Aiwiyaonghen, the sacred waist-girdle of the Iranians. It has been shown how the extant Sūrya

reliefs of the Kushan, Gupta and late Gupta periods illustrate these iconographic features described in the texts.

It has been assumed by some that the early north Indian Sūrya image had its prototype in the Iranian Mithra. But the ancient Iranians themselves did not represent the Sun god in human form in the earliest times, and like the ancient Indians used to represent him by means of such symbols as ' a solar disc ', ' a wheel ' etc. In one of the sepulchres of Darius near Naqsh-i-Rustam Mithra is represented as a round disc. In the later Mithraic monuments the human busts of sun and moon are to be found. But these could not have served as the proto-types of the north Indian Sūrya figures, though such busts made their appearance only at a time when Mithraism was thoroughly Hellenised in the courts of the west Asian successors of Alexander the Great. The fully anthropomorphic representation of Mithra in ancient art was due to this factor, and the types of Apollo-Helios, the Greek solar divinities, served as the original of the Iranian Sun god Mithra or Mihira. That the Hellenes of Asia Minor identified this form of Mithra with their own solar and planetary gods, is shown by a monument set up by Antiochus I of Commagne (69-38 B.C.); in the enormous cairn of the tumulus of Nimrud Dagh are five sculptures, one of which has the inscription, 'Apollo-Mithras-Helios-Hermes'. Elaborate notice has been taken of the figures of Mihira-Helios on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka in Chapter IV of this book, and there is little doubt that such forms were based on the representations of solar deities in the coins of the Indo-Greek rulers like, Apollodotus II, Philoxenus and Telephus.[1]

[1] The reverse device of a rare silver coin of Telephus shows the nimbate Sun god and the Moon god with a crescent on his head; they should be regarded as the prototypes of the Kushan Mihira and Mao. The Sun and Moon on Telephus's silver coin were also, for all practical purposes, the Iranian Mihira and Mao, for, in Greek mythology Salene, the Moon, is a goddess. The Sun god here must have been derived directly or indirectly from a still earlier representation of Apollo on some round and rare coins of Apollodotus; Apollo in these coins wears boots, as does the solar deity on the rare coins of Telephus; *B.M.C.*, pl. XXXII, 7, pl. X, 5-9.

The mediaeval Sūrya reliefs of Eastern India usually fall under two categories, one showing the god standing in the company of his attendants, the other showing him seated in *padmāsana*, the former outnumbering the latter. The first group again has more than one variety, some illustrative of the earlier tradition in which Daṇḍī, Piṅgala, Ūṣā, Pratyūṣā, Aruṇa and the seven horses are shown on the relief beside the lotus-carrying two-armed central figure of Sūrya dressed in *udīcyaveśa* (partially subdued in many of them). An early mediaeval Sūrya image from Khiching illustrated here (Pl. XXX, Fig. 2) is a fine specimen of this variety, and the Orissan artist deserves high praise for the excellent specimen of iconographic art chiselled out by him. This relief compares very favourably with the many elaborate standing Sūrya figures of Bengal and Bihar of the Pāla and Sena times in which the composition is overcrowded with accessory figures and other details. The latter are very often profusely ornamented, the stela (the back-slab, *prabhāvalī*) is usually pointed with the *kīrttimukha* design on its top centre, and the ' companions ' (besides those mentioned above the others are his several queens, Rājñī, Nikṣubhā, Chāyā, Suvarccasā, the earth-goddess Mahāśvetā) of the main deity are arranged in several parallel layers by his side.[1] A comparison of another Khiching Sūrya relief, this time of the much rarer variety of seated Sun god, with a similar type of image from north Bengal (Bairhatta, Dinajpur), will also give more credit to the unknown artist of a corner of Orissa. The former depicts the two-armed Sun god, seated in *padmāsana* on a double-petalled lotus with his two hands holding full blossomed lotuses by their stalks; the god wears a conical crown, ear-rings, necklace and other ornaments; the *udīcyaveśa* is just faintly suggested by the artist; Aruṇa driving the seven horses is the only accessory motif in the relief (Pl. XXX, Fig. 3). The sweet expression of the face beautified by a faint smile and the excellent modelling of the whole composition endow it with a quality

[1] For such elaborate Sūrya reliefs of Eastern India, *cf. Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I, Pl. XXX, Fig. 76; LXVIII, Fig. 166, etc.

seldom found in such other reliefs of Eastern India. The Bairhatta inscribed sculpture of seated Sūrya on the other hand (c. 12th century A.D., the Khiching figure is at least a century or two earlier) is comparatively heavy and crude in its style and execution, and the whole composition is crowded with the seated male attendants (Daṇḍī and Piṅgala), the standing female companions of the god and the miniature figures of the eight other ' grahas ', four on his either side; the pedestal inscription describes the god as ' remover of all diseases ' (*samasta-rogānāṃ harttā*).[1]

The Western Indian images of Sūrya, though stylistically different from their Eastern Indian counterparts, resemble the latter in the broad outlines of their iconography.[2] One of the earliest extant Sūrya images of the South Indian variety belongs to the Paraśurāmeśvar Temple at Guḍimallam (near Renigunta in North Arcot). It stands barefooted on a pedestal on which neither Aruṇa nor the seven horses are shown; the upper part of the body is left bare, and there are no attendants; the hands of the god raised to the level of the shoulders hold two lotus buds (the sculpture is of about the seventh century A.D.). Many other Sūrya figures of south India of a later period show almost similar iconographic traits, and Rao after a careful comparison of the Sun images of Northern and Southern India arrived at some generalisations.[3] Rao's observations are more or less correct, though there are exceptions which may prove the rule. The difference in the iconographic presentations of the Sun god in the two halves of India may probably be partially

1 Dacca *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 456.

2 *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 84-5.

3 Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 311-12. Some of them can be enumerated thus: The south Indian Sūryas have their hands raised to the level of their shoulders, and the lotuses held by them are only half-blossomed; their legs and feet are always left bare; the north Indian images have generally their hands at the general level of the hips or the elbows, and are made to carry full-blown lotuses rising up to the level of their shoulders, and they wear boots: Aruṇa and the seven horses, almost invariably present in north Indian varieties of Sūrya, are very often absent in their south Indian counterparts, and the number of attendants in the latter is very small (Daṇḍī, Kuṇḍī or Piṅgala, the arrow-shooting goddesses, the several consorts of the god, etc., are almost invariably absent, especially in the Tamil districts) '.

explained by the remark that whatever importance the Sun cult enjoined in the Pallava and later periods in south India was not due to the East Iranian form of Sun worship, and the cult itself was not much in vogue there.[1]

Dvādaśādityas have been variously enumerated in different texts. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* does not name and describe them individually, but simply says that ' the twelve Ādityas should be given the form of Sūrya '. Gopinath Rao summarises in a tabular form the description of the Dvādaśādityas as incorporated in the *Viśvakarmaśāstra* (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 310), but in his table all of them are shown as four-armed. The text quoted by him, however, explicitly says that two of them, Puṣan and Viṣṇu are to be shown as two-armed.[2] Separate images of these Ādityas are very rare; they are usually shown carved on the sides and top of the detached frames (most probably set up behind the image of the Sun god) or on the *prabhāvalī* of the Sūrya image. The architectural frame in the Junagadh Museum shows two-armed figures of Sūrya carrying lotuses in separate niches, three on either side and five on the top (eleven in all). Barring the central figure on the top, which is shown seated with Ūṣā and Pratyūṣā on either side, all the other ten are shown standing and attended by other female companions. Four of the Navagrahas, probably Śukra and Śani and certainly Rāhu and Ketu, are also placed on the top. The eleven Ādityas together with the missing central figure of Sūrya would make up the requisite number.[3]

1 Though Ptolemy mentions the Maga Brahmanas (Magoi Brachmanoi) as residing in one corner of south India in the second century A.D., the East Iranian Sun cult does not seem to have made any headway there. Rao refers to the 11th century A.D. Sun temple at Suryanarkoil in the district of Tanjore, but there are very few such shrines in south India. The extant south Indian Sūrya reliefs mostly hail from shrines connected with other major cults like those of Śiva and Viṣṇu.

2 *Puṣākhyasya bhavenmūrtirdvibhujā padmalāñcchitā* l.....
Sudarśanakarā savye padmahastā tu vāmataḥ l
Eṣā syād dvādaśī mūrtir Viṣṇoramitatejasaḥ ; *Ibid*, App. C, pp. 86-7.

3 Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 317, pl. XCV. H. D. Sankalia draws our attention to more or less similar motifs found in Western India: *Architectural Antiquities of Northern Gujrat*, pp. 158-59, Figs. 70 and 72.

Rao is silent about the images of Revanta, probably because they are almost unknown in Southern India. Revanta is one of the sons of Sūrya, some of the others being Yama, the Aśvins, and Manus (the present and the future). The worship of this god seems to have been much in vogue in Eastern India.[1] The *Kālikāpurāṇa* describes his figure and says, that he should be worshipped either in an image, or a water-vessel, at the gates according to the rites of sun worship (Ch. V. 49). The worship of the god was also known at Gujrat, as proved by Śārṅgadeva's inscription from Vanthli (*Ep. Indica*, Vol. X, Luders *List*, No. 624). The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* lays down that 'Revanta riding on horse back is (shown) engaged with his companions in the sport of hunting' (Ch. 57, V. 56); the *Viṣṇudharmottara* simply says that 'the Lord Revanta should be like Sūrya, (and) on the back of a horse' (Bk. III, Ch. 70, V. 53). The Ghatnagar (Dinajpur) black basalt image of this god (now in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum) presents him in a very interesting manner. The booted god rides on horse-back holding a whip in his right hand and the reins in his left, with an attendant holding an umbrella over his head; two robbers are near him, one ready to attack him from the front, the other from a tree-top behind. The pedestal shows a woman standing, a devotee, a man with a sword and shield about to attack a woman cutting a fish with a fish-knife; on the right corner of the partially broken stele appears a dwelling house with a couple inside it (P. XXIX, Fig. 2). The *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* account of Revanta seems to throw some light on this genre scene in this manner:

Revanta, son of Sūrya and Saṃjñā, and the king of the Guhyakas, delivers people from the terrors of forests and other lonely places, of great conflagrations, of enemies and robbers and bestows upon his worshippers comfort, intelligence, happiness, kinship, perfect health, fame and exalted

[1] Raghunandana, the great Smārta writer of Bengal, quotes a passage from *Kalpataru* (which borrows it from *Brahmapurāna*), which records the ceremonial worship of Revanta (*Pujyaḥ sāśvaiśca Revanto yathāvibhavavistaraiḥ*); *Tithitattva*, p. 690.

position' (Bibliotheca Edition, ch. 109, vv. 23-3). Some sections of the Ghatnagar relief seem to typify peaceful home life, while others, the perils of life. It may be noted, incidentally that the motif of 'a woman cutting a fish' also occurs in the pedestal of the Hāritī image in the Dacca Museum.[1] In a very indifferently preserved image of this god recovered from an old tank at Badkamta (Tippera), and now in the Dacca Museum Collection, he is shown on horse-back with a drinking vessel in his right hand, accompanied by musicians and other male and female attendants, and even retriever dogs. *Mṛgayā* (hunting) is a royal sport (*vyasana*) in which revelries were a common feature. Several sculptures exactly similar to the Badkamta relief hailing from Bihar and now in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, were at first wrongly identified as Kalkī, the future incarnation of Viṣṇu, but their correct identity was suggested by B. B. Bidyabinod (*J.A.S.B.*, 1909, pp. 391-92, Pl. XXX).

The worship of the Navagrahas was and is still much in vogue in different parts of India, especially Eastern India. The *Yājñavalkyasūtra* (Bombay edition, 1892, p. 89) lays down that the *grahayajña* should be performed by one who desired peace and prosperity, ample rains (for his crops), long life and nourishment, and (by him) who wants to harm his enemies; the figures of Sūrya, Soma (moon), the son of the Earth (Maṅgala, Mars), the son of Soma (Budha, Mercury), Bṛhaspati (Jupiter), Śukra (Venus), Śani (Saturn), Rāhu and Ketu should be made of copper, crystal, red sandal (wood), gold (in the case of Budha and Bṛhaspati), silver, iron, lead and bell-metal respectively; or these figures should be drawn on canvas in their respective colours, or in *maṇḍalas* made of scented paste (sandal wood paste—these are of the *lepajā* variety as noticed in Chapter VI of this book). This text as well as many other texts like *Viṣṇudharmottara*, *Agnipurāṇa*, *Aṃśumadbhedāgama*, *Śilparatna* describe their forms in different

[1] N. B. Sanyal was the first to study correctly this relief in his article; *I.H.O.*, Vol. III, 1927, pp. 469-72 and plate.

manner, and the extant Navagraha reliefs containing their separate and group representations often depict them in different manner. Stone slabs with the figures of these ' grahas ', usually standing and rarely seated, were used as architectural pieces in mediaeval temples of different parts of India. This mediaeval convention did undoubtedly serve as a prophylactic measure for the safety of the temples. A late Gupta fragmentary sandstone relief from Sarnath (now exhibit No. 1536 in the Indian Museum) contains the figures of four ' planets ', Bṛhaspati, Śukra, Śani and Rāhu. All are two-armed, the first three standing in graceful poses, while the fierce-looking Rāhu is shown only up to the breast with a grinning face, round protruding eyes, hair tied up in a bunch of spiral coils rising upwards (*piṅgalordhakeśa*). Bṛhaspati, Śukra and Śani have each a halo behind his head, and a rosary in his right hand, while the left hands of the first two hold a water-pot, Śani's left hand being broken; Ketu is not shown in it, as Rāhu whose hands are in the ' *tarpaṇa mudrā*, occupies the (extreme) end of the carved slab (Pl. XXXI, Fig. 1). Thus, the slab seems to have contained the figures of eight ' grahas ' only (the figures of the first four being broken away), and this seems to have been the earlier convention in architectural use of these ' planets ', Ketu being a later addition. This observation is borne out by the evidence of the Śiva temples of Bhuvanesvar (Orissa). The lintel slabs of all the earlier such shrines of the Bhauma-Kara period there contain only the figures of eight ' grahas ', Ketu making his appearance on the architraves from the Gaṅga period onwards.[1] . In some of the later such slabs (specially hailing from Bengal), the group representation begins with the figure of Gaṇapati. This is proved by a very fine sculpture found at Kankandighi (Twenty-four Perganas, Bengal; it is now in the Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta), which shows the nine

1 K. C. Panigrahi first drew my attention to this feature of the Bhuvanesvar temples. Another point of interest connected with the Orissan ' Navagraha ' slabs is that in the earlier ones Bṛhaspati and Śukra are shown beardless (as in the Sarnath relief), but in later ones they are almost invariably bearded.

' Planets ' standing in graceful pose on lotus pedestals, holding their respective attributes in their hands, with Gaṇeśa in the beginning; Bṛhaspati alone is shown with a beard, their respective cognizances being carved below the long double-petalled lotus. The beautifully designed long rectangular slab with the main figures inset in very high relief, appears to prove that the composition was an object for regular worship in times of *grahayāga*, and not a ' door-piece ' (Pl. XXXI, Fig. 2). A unique mode of representing the ' grahas ' is found in the twelve-spoked wheel, the Navagraha-cakra, found among the ruins of Khiching. The twelve-spoked wheel rests on its side on a lotus pedestal; inside the broad rim are arranged the figure of the nine ' Planets ', Sūrya seated in the top centre, Rāhu and Ketu on either side in the bottom, on the sides are carved one above the other the six other ' grahas ', three on either side; in the centre of the wheel is a three-faced (?) four-armed figure seated in *padmāsana* with its front hands in the *dhyānamudrā*, the objects in the back hands being indistinct (it may stand for Brahmā, *i.e.*, Dhātā or Vidhātā); flames issue from the rim of the wheel (Pl. XXX, Fig. 1). This sculpture also seems to have been a regular object of worship like the Kankandighi relief.

CHAPTER XI

Cult Icons

Siva and Sakti

Siva

Śiva is one of the most influential members of the orthodox Brahmanical triad. Though he is specially associated with the act of *saṃhāra* (destruction) or *pralaya* (absorption) in the Hindu concept of Trinity, an exclusive worshipper of Śiva thinks him no less associated with the other two acts of *sṛṣṭi* (creation) and *sthiti* (preservation) generally attributed to Brahmā and Viṣṇu, the other members of the triad. Śiva is also endowed with the acts of *anugraha* or *prasāda* (' conferment of grace ') and *tirobhāva* (' power of concealment ' or ' obscuration '). These collectively make up his five-fold activities (*pañcakṛtyas*), and his numerous manifestations according to his worshippers are connected with the performance of one or other of them for their edification and benefit. Śiva is also described in the early and mediaeval Brahmanical texts as the originator and the best exponent of various arts and accomplishments, such as those of deep concentration (*yoga*), expounding (*vyākhyāna*) the *śastras* (the various *āgamas* were revelations from him), music, dancing, etc. He has also been conceived as the lord of all created beings, and is often described as Paśupati, Bhūtapati and Bhūtanātha. He is the great lord (Maheśvara), the greatest of the gods (Mahādeva), the beloved husband of Umā, the great Mother-goddess (Umāpati—in this aspect he is the primeval Father-god), and is the chief possessor of Māyā (Māyin). Many and various are his aspects and attributes which appear to be delineated in his numerous epithets and names, which are sometimes incorporated in different sections of the epic and Purāṇic literature (*cf. Mahābhārata*,

XIII, 17, which enumerates more than one thousand names of Śiva—*Śivasahasranāma*). A careful analysis of some of these epithets only will prove that this god-concept in its developed phase arose out of the commingling of many such concepts current among different ethnic units of India or among the different branches of the same ethnic stock.

The epic or Purāṇic Śiva undoubtedly had his Vedic and pre-Vedic counterparts or prototypes. Rudra was the Vedic counterpart of Śiva, and the Vedic-Brahmanic characterisation of Rudra enunciates how many of the traits of the god are inherent in the one hundred names of Rudra enumerated in the *Śatarudrīya* text of the *Śukla Yajurveda* of the Vājasaneyī school (*Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā*, Ch. 16). The association of Rudra with the hills (one of his names in this context is *Giritra* or ' one who lives in the hills '), his dual nature of a terrific as well as a pacific god, his use of animal-hide as his garment (*Kṛttivāsa*), the crown of snail-shell like *jaṭās* on his head (*Kapardī*), etc., are emphasised by these epithets or names which were the roots of many mythologies elaborately narrated in the epic and Purāṇic literature.[1] The worship of a god similar in some respects to the Purānic Śiva seems to have been well in vogue among the early Indus Valley people. The name of this pre-Vedic prototype is not now known to us, but Rudra continued to be one of the principal names of Śiva in the epics and Purāṇas. In the Vedic texts of earlier strata the word *śiva* occurs as one of the attributive epithets of several Vedic gods, and not of Rudra in particular. In such uses of the word, its original sense of ' auspicious ' is retained, and it is only in the later Vedic literature that it is used as a proper name. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, a theistic text extolling the glories of Rudra, uses the word *śiva* several times as one of the various names of Rudra. The *Sāṅkhyāyana*, *Kauṣītakī* and other *Brāhmaṇas* use such names as Śiva, Rudra-Śiva, Mahādeva, Maheśvara and Īśāna for denoting this great god,

1 " The epithet Kapardin or ' the wearer of matted hair,' is probably due to his being regarded as identical with Agni, the fumes of which look like matted hair ": R. G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

as the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* also does. Weber suggested long ago that such epithets like Mahādeva, Īśāna, etc., of this god ' involving quite a special prominence of the deity as compared with the other gods indicated a sectarian worship'.[1] Considering the myths about the origin and growth of the concept of Rudra, Aufrecht also observed that ' the period of the Brāhmaṇas was one when the old polytheism was in a condition of decline and the new faith which presents itself in Indian religious history as Śaivism was gaining ground.' [2] The *Átharvaveda* presupposes the rise of Rudra to the position of the supreme god, for it assigns various such epithets to him as Bhava, Śarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Mahādeva and Īśāna. The *Śatapatha* and *Kauṣītakī Brāhmaṇas* add Aśani to this list thus making their number eight (inclusive of Rudra), each four of which typify his two aspects, *ghora* (terrific) and *saumya* (peaceful). Thus, Rudra, Śarva (arrow-wielder), Ugra and Aśani characterise his destructive aspect, while Bhava, Paśupati, Mahādeva and Īśāna his beneficent one. Such well-known names of Purāṇic Śiva as Śambhu and Śaṃkara indicative of his beneficent nature occur as so many epithets of Rudra as early as in the *Śatarudrīya* which also contains epithets descriptive of the dark and fierce aspects of the god.[3]

It is not possible for us to determine the exact date of the complete emergence of the cult centering round Rudra-Śiva. The process of its evolution was undoubtedly gradual, and several literary data of the pre-Christian period seem to indicate the stages of its growth and development. Pāṇini in one of his *Sūtras* (IV. 1. 112) seems to refer to the followers or worshippers of Śiva. The aphorism (*Śivādibhyoṇ*) means that ' the affix *aṇ* comes in the sense of a descendant, after

[1] *Indische Studien*, ii, 302.

[2] A. B. Keith, *Ṛgveda Brāhmaṇas*, p. 26.

[3] ' He is called the lord of the paths, of the forests and of those who roam in them, of thieves and highway robbers who frequent and move about in lonely places to prevent being detected, and also of outcasts who live away from the usual dwellings of men '; R. G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 103. Rudra is described as Eka-Vrātya, ' the Vrātya *par excellence* ', and this epithet characterises in a very interesting manner the association of elements in his composite character, not derived from the orthodox Vedic order.

the names Śiva, etc.' The word *śaiva*, thus formed, may be presumed to denote ' a worshipper of Śiva ', as the same significance was attached to it in the *Mahābhāṣya*.[1] Patañjali refers to Śiva as well as Rudra several times. Rudra is twice described as the god to whom animals are sacrificed (*paśunā Rudraṃ yajate*), and in two other passages the medicinal herbs of Rudra are called auspicious (*Śivā Rudrasya bheṣajī*).[2] It has already been noted in Chapter IX of this book that Śiva is mentioned as one of the folk divinities (*laukika devatās*) in the *Mahābhāṣya* (*supra*, p. 338). But it is interesting to note in this connection that one of the earliest clear references to a Śaiva sect is to be found in this text. While commenting on Pāṇini's Sūtra, V. 2. 36 (*ayaḥśūladaṇḍājinābhyāṃ ṭhakṭhañau*), Patañjali mentions the Śiva-bhāgavatas who carried an iron lance (*āyaḥśūlikaḥ*). He further observes that because this type of a sectarian devotee seeks to obtain his desire by violent means, the fulfilment of which should be sought for by mild ways, he is called *āyaḥśūlikaḥ* (Keilhorn, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 387-88). Though the commentator does not comment on the term *daṇḍājina* in the Sūtra, it is apparent that a staff (*daṇḍa*) and a hide (*ajina*) were also the characteristic marks of a Śiva-bhāgavata who was an *āyaḥśūlika* and at the same time a *dāṇḍājinika*. These characteristic traits of the exclusive worshippers of Śiva should be compared with those of the Sibae (or Siboi), a tribe living in a part of the Panjab during the time of Alexander's invasion. The Sibae are described by Curtius, Diodorus and other classical writers as dressed in animal skins, having clubs for their weapons, and branding with the mark of a club their oxen and mules. The religious association of this Panjab tribe with Śiva appears to be substantiated by Patañjali who, while commenting on the Vārttikas on Pāṇini's Sūtra, IV. 2. 104 (*avyayāt tyap*) refers to the Udīcyagrāma (' northern village ') Śivapura or Śaivapura (Kielhorn, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 396-97).

[1] Pāṇini also mentions several names of Rudra such as Bhava, Śarva and Muḍha in one of his Sūtras (IV. 1. 49).

[2] Kielhorn, *Mahābhāṣya*, Vol. I, pp. 331, 424; Vol. III, pp. 14, 403.

Mahāmāyūrī, one of the five great mantra-formulas of northern Buddhism, composed sometime before the 4th century A.D. (it was translated into Chinese four times between the 4th and the 8th centuries A.D.), refers to the tutelary deity of the *āhāra* (district town) of Śivapura as Śiva. Sylvain Levi long ago connected Śivapura of this Buddhist text with Udīcyagrāma of Patañjali (*Journal Asiatique*, 1915, pp. 37, 70). It can legitimately be inferred from all these data that there lived in parts of Northern India exclusive worshippers of Śiva even long before the time of Patañjali.

The Śiva-bhāgavatas of Patañjali seem to have had some association with the Pāśupatas referred to in later texts and inscriptions. The Nārāyanīya section of the *Mahābhārata* enumerates five systems such as Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Pāñcarātra, Veda and the Pāśupata. It describes the teacher of the last as Śiva-Śrīkaṇṭha, the lord of Umā, the master of spirits, and the son of Brahmadeva (Śāntiparvan, Chs. 64-7). This may or may not imply the existence in history of a possible human founder of the religious system developing round Śiva. But Purānic and inscriptional data undoubtedly refer to a human being, Lakulīśa by name, an inhabitant of ancient Kāyārohaṇa (modern Karvan in the Kathiawar Peninsula), who became intimately associated with the growth and development of the Pāśupata cult. The Mathura stone inscription of the time of Chandragupta II (G.E. 61=381 A.D.) helped D. R. Bhandarkar to assign to Lakulīśa (described in the Purāṇas as the 28th and the last incarnation of Śiva) a date in the first half of the 2nd century A.D. Such a date would not justify us in describing him as the originator or founder of the Pāśupata school, if the Pāśupatas are to be identified with the Śiva-bhāgavatas of Patañjali.[1] If the identification of the two orders be correct, and there are good grounds for this assumption, then Lakulīśa must have to be regarded as the organiser or

[1] R. G. Bhandarkar has identified the Śiva-bhāgavatas with the Pāśupatas, and has placed Lakulīśa a little earlier than or contemporaneous with Patañjali; *op. cit.*, pp. 116-17.

systematiser of the system, and not as its actual founder.[1] The great drive he gave to the pre-existing worship of Śiva-Paśupati according to the already accepted tenets was continued afterwards; his four immediate disciples, Kuśika, Mitra, Garga and Kauruṣya, are traditionally regarded as the expounders of four sub-sects branching out of the Pāśupata system. That Kuśika and others were not legendary figures seems to be proved by the fact that Ārya Uditācārya, the donor in the Mathura inscription noted above, describes himself as tenth in apostolic succession from Kuśika (*Kuśikād-daśamaḥ*). Lakulīśa composed a work called ***Pañcārthavidyā***, a passage from which is quoted by **Mādhavāchārya** in his *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*. It lays down that ' a Pāśupata should bathe thrice a day, should lie upon dust (or ashes), and oblation is an observance divided into six members ' In the *Atharvaśiras Upaniṣad*, a sectarian work devoted to the exaltation of Rudra (Śiva)'s glory, the ***Pāśupatavrata*** is described as consisting of besmearing the initiate's body with ashes in conjunction with the muttering of a mantra. By performing this vow (*vrata*), the worshipper of Rudra-Śiva has his bonds loosened, and he is delivered from the fetters of his individual existence. This is Paśupāśavimokṣaṇa, and it is one of the principal characteristics of the Pāśupata school. Varāhamihira refers to the Pāśupatas as *sabhasma-dvijas* (*cf. supra*, p. 230) and Hiuen Tsang describes the same sect as ' the ash-besmeared tīrthikas '. The *Pāśupata Sūtras* and the commentary on it by Kauṇḍinya (works earlier than the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*) not only mention this vow about the ashes, but also incorporate other practices of the Pāśupata ritualists, which are of an outlandish character.[2] The Kāpālikas, the Kālāmukhas and

[1] For this view, *cf.* the present writer's article on ' Lakulīśa, the Founder or Systematiser of the Pāśupata System ' in *Proceedings of the Jaipur Session of the Indian History Congress*, pp. 32 ff.

[2] Some of these are ' doing a thing condemned by all ' (*avitatkaraṇa*), ' speaking nonsensical and absurd things ' (*avitadohāṣaṇa*), ' showing oneself to be in love by means of amorous gestures on seeing a beautiful woman ' (*śṛṅgaraṇa*), etc. These constitute the *Vātulatantra* mentioned by Utpala, the commentator of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (*cf. supra*, p. 230).

similar other Śaiva sects of a *ghora* type were developed at a fairly early date from the Pāśupata sect as organised by Lakulīśa, and the peculiar and apparently unsocial and outlandish practices of these extreme forms of Śaiva sectaries appear to be reminiscent of the terrific aspect of Rudra-Śiva. Literary and inscriptional data of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods give us a glimpse into these rituals which substantiate to a great extent the association of the *ghora* forms of the god with these extreme schools.[1]

A brief reference may now be made to the Śaiva schools of the other group whose tenets are of a moderate character. As a class this group is of a later date, and the tenets of most of them are more philosophical than ritualistic in character. One of the most important and perhaps the earliest in this group is the Śaiva system, another later and developed variety of which was the school of the Śuddha-Śaivas or the Āgamānta Śaivas. These Śaivas are to be distinguished from the Vedānta Śaivas who made full use of the teachings of the Vedas and Upaniṣads. The Śaivas or the Śuddha-Śaivas, on the other hand, based their tenets principally on the Āgamas which were, according to them, direct revelations from Śiva, and thus were of far greater importance than the Vedas regarded by them as only 'his breath' (*Yāsya niśvasitaṃ Vedaḥ*). The Śaiva Āgamas (28 in number) enjoin that there are three principles,—the Lord (Pati, *i.e.*, Śiva), the individual soul (Paśu), and the fetters (Pāśa),—which bind the individual to his mundane existence. Like the Pāñcarātra saṃhitās, the Śaiva Āgamas discuss the four parts or stages, *Caryā*, *Kriyā*, *Yoga* and *Jñāna*, of a well-regulated religious life. *Caryā* is the stage of practical piety and performance of the prescribed duties and rites; *Kriyā* consists of the confirmatory sacrament (*dīkṣā*) and the

[1] Bhavabhūti refers to the practices of the Kāpālikas in his *Mālatīmādhava*; the Kāpālikas are described there and in some other texts as Mahāvratadharas. The Nirmand copper-plate inscription of the time of the Maukhari chief Śarvavarman mentions the installation of the image of Kapāleśvara (*C.I.I.*, III, pp. 286-91; *Proceedings of the Bombay Session of the All-India Oriental Conference*, 1949, pp. 298-300). R. G. Bhandarkar quotes a few other instances of the allied Kālamukha sect., *op. cit.*, p. 120.

five purifications associated with true worship; *Yoga* denotes the stage at which the individual soul attains communion with Śiva as a result of the eight usual observances of the Yogin; and lastly *Jñāna*, the highest stage preparatory to final liberation, is that of true knowledge which makes the individual soul pre-eminently fit for intimate union with god.[1] Śambhūdeva, one of the exponents of the school, calls it the *Siddhāntaśāstra*, or the true Śāstra based upon the Mantras revealed by Śiva himself. The Sāṃkhya and the Yoga systems of philosophy no doubt influenced the tenets of the Āgamāntins, but in the popular presentation of the latter women, Śūdras and Prātilomas were allowed to participate. The holiest Pañcākṣara Mantra (*Namaḥ Śivāya*) of the Śaivas could be muttered and meditated on by every Śivabhakta, and an initiated Śūdra could take part in the ritual worship of the Śaiva images. Some of the Śaiva images again, as will be shown later, illustrated in an esoteric manner different sections of the philosophy of this school. The other moderate and highly philosophical school of Śaivism is that which was given shape and developed in Kashmir, as the Āgamānta Śaiva school was given final shape in the south, at first by Vasugupta and then developed by his two pupils Kallaṭa and Somānanda in the 9th century A.D. This school, known as the 'Trika' system, for it also dealt with the three categories, Pati, Paśu and Pāśa, had two branches, Spanda and Pratyabhijña, associated respectively with Kallaṭa and Somānanda. These two branches did not lay any great stress on disciplinary ritualism; the first, *i.e.*, *Spandaśāstra* emphasised intense contemplation for the individual aspirant after the highest realisation of god within himself, the second on the spiritual aid of the preceptor in helping his disciple to recog-

[1] Five purifications are the removal of 'evil desires, anger, and I-ness from one's heart, and replacing them by God, and feeling his presence there at all times' (St. Vallalar); the eight observances or elements of a Yoġin are 'Good qualities (*yama*), good acts (*niyama*), right posture, breath control, removal of mental distraction, concentration of the mind on God, spiritual contact (*yoga*), and spiritual experience'; S. Shivapadasundaram, *The Śaiva School of Hinduism*, pp. 177-78.

nise truly the identity of his own self with god. But the followers of this monistic form of Śaivism were not much concerned with the worship of Śaivite icons which appear to have been made much use of in their disciplinary *sādhanās* by the Pāśupatas and the Śaivas. The sect of the Vīraśaivas or Liṅgāyats, which was systematised by Vasava as late as the second half of the 12th century A.D. in Southern India, did not go in also for image worship; but the worship of the 'Iṣṭa-Liṅga' (the aniconic emblem of the god of their choice,—their '*iṣṭadevatā*' Śiva), which they used to carry on their body, comprised the chief act of divine worship by the followers of this sect. The special class of mediaeval Tamil Śivabhaktas, known generally as the Nāyanārs (or Nāyanmārs), on the other hand, appear to have been mostly emotional worshippers of the god, to whom temple-ritual was necessary for the outward manifestation of their one-souled devotion to their deity. The first seven collections of the numerous songs in Tamil composed by them comprised the most sacred *Devāram* hymns sung ceremonially in the Śaiva shrines of the south. The best honoured among these saints was Tirunānasambandha who appears to have flourished in the seventh century A.D.; he composed as many as three hundred and eighty-four hymns known as *Paḍigam*. There are references in these songs to many south Indian Śaiva shrines and the particular aspects of the god associated with them; the devotional Śaiva hymns composed by Appar, Sundaramūrti, Māṇikkavasahar and other saints of the south also contain such references. The songs characterise the pacific aspect of the god in a loving manner, though in some of them veiled references to his destructive or *ugra* aspects are made.

It has just been mentioned that the Vīraśaivas of the south mainly worshipped the emblem of Śiva, and were not much in favour of worshipping him in other types of images. But from a fairly early period the Śaivas in general used to place this emblem (Śivaliṅga) as the principal object of their worship in the main sanctum of the shrines of their god, and the various types of his anthropomorphic figures were

carved in the different parts of the temples more or less as accessory figures. The Kailāsa temple of Ellora, like many other Śaiva temples of India, housed the emblem in the main sanctum, and the numerous anthropomorphic forms of Śiva, mostly illustrative of stories associated with the god, were arranged in rows in the covered verandas of the quadrangle, as a veritable sculpture gallery. It thus behoves us first to say something about the real nature of this emblem in its earlier phase, and note some details about its developed varieties of a comparatively late date. It may be observed at the very outset that the principal idea underlying it in its most primitive aspect is phallic in character. Gopinath Rao demonstrated it clearly by many quotations from several Purāṇas and other early and late texts, as well as by his elaborate study of one of the earliest such emblems with the figure of Śiva carved on it discovered by him at Guḍimallam (near Renigunta in Andhra State).[1] It has been shown in the fourth and fifth chapters of this book how the numismatic and glyptic representations of the emblem from the 3rd-2nd century B.C. to the 4th-5th century A.D. also support the hypothesis of Gopinath Rao. Incidental references to phallicism prevailing among the early Indus Valley people and to the Vedic deprecation of this practice have also been made in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of this book. One of the reasons for the hatred of the orthodox Vedists towards the Śaivas might be traced to this practice, as has been suggested by Rao. There is very little doubt that the orthodox section of the Hindus at first showed tardiness in giving sanction to this practice, and this is proved by the fact that no clear reference to the phallic emblem forming a part of the ritualism of some of their people is found in the older sections of their literature. It is only in the epic literature that we find for the first time unmistakable evidence of the worship

[1] Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pt. I, pp. 55-63, 65-71. His identification of the inscribed sculpture found at Bhita (near Allahabad—it is now in the Lucknow Museum) as a Pañcamukha Śivaliṅga of the pre-Christian period (pp. 63-5) does not bear scrutiny; *cf.* the present writer's observations on it in *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. III, 1935, pp. 40 ff.

of Śiva in his phallic form, and that too in sections adjudged as late ones by Indologists.[1] The reason for the earlier non-acceptance of the emblem by a section of the Hindus is undoubtedly to be found in its stark realism in the early period. But the old ideology about it as a symbol of the virile father-god was too strong among a large section of the people to be brushed aside and ignored by the less numerous but more intellectual section. The latter, however, appears to have made a compromise. They accepted the emblem as the holiest one of Śiva, but on one condition, that of conventionalising it in such a way that its original realism was thoroughly subdued by stages. The gradual change started from the Gupta age, the age of cultural renaissance in India. So great was this change in the manner of its ultimate representation, that some modern scholars thought that it was derived from the Buddhist *stūpa* model.[2] It is also not quite correct to suppose that it symbolised the union of the male and female principle even from its early phase. True it is that the *pīṭha* part of the comparatively late Śivaliṅgas of the conventionalised shape is often described as the *arghya* or *yoni* (the female principle) in many late texts; but Tāntricism had developed to a great extent when they were written, and the projecting portion of the *pīṭha* really served the very useful purpose of draining off the water profusely poured on its top to some distance from its base.

Archaeological data also conclusively support these suggestions. One of the earliest extant realistic emblems of Śiva is the Guḍimallam Liṅga just mentioned. Carved out of hard igneous stone of a dark brown colour with some polish, it abruptly stands five feet above the floor level (there is no pedestal) and is almost a foot in thickness. The nut is differentiated from the shaft by a deep slanting groove cut near

[1] *Mahābhārata*, XII. 14. 231-33: Upamanyu tells Kṛṣṇa that 'Mahādeva is the only deity whose organ of generation was worshipped in former times or is now worshipped by the gods such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and others, and Śiva and Umā were the real creators of animals, because the latter carry on their bodies the marks of these two and not the marks of other divinities'.

[2] E. B. Havell was once the exponent of this view; *The Ancient and Mediaeval Architecture of India* (1915), pp. 106-07.

the top, and the front part of the shaft bears on it the two-armed figure of Śiva in high relief standing on the shoulders of the crouching figure of Apasmārapuruṣa. It may be incidentally noted that the *urdahvaliṅga* sign usually found on Śiva figures of the post-Christian period is not emphasised (the 'organ' shown downwards is, however, clearly discernible through the somewhat diaphanous drapery), and the Śivaliṅga is fixed in a hole cut into the floor. Śiva holds in his right hand a ram, and in his left a small water vessel with a battle-axe resting on his left shoulder (Pl. XXXI, Fig. 3). The exhibit No. H. 1 in the collection of the Lucknow Museum described as a 'Liṅga with a broadened top' is a realistic type of this emblem from the north, but without the figure of Śiva on its shaft. This red sandstone sculpture comes from the Mathura region. The nut is clearly demarcated from the shaft by the broadening of the top from a slanting groove cut round the junction of the shaft and the nut, and there is a decorative band in the middle of the latter; it is of the Kushan period. Another huge stone Śivaliṅga in the Mathura Museum collection (measuring as much as 200 cm.) is divided into three sections: (1) a roughly square undressed lower portion, (2) the round middle section with its girth shortening upwards, and (3) the tapering round nut broader than the top portion of the middle section. The nut is distinctly marked on one side of its lower end by a dentate groove helping to suggest some realism. The suggestiveness is, however, somewhat subdued here, and it is evidently of a little later date. With the passing of time, the process of conventionalisation made much advance, and the stages of its rapid progress can be seen in any assortment of the phalli representative of different periods. The Karamḍāṇḍā inscribed Śivaliṅga of the time of Kumāragupta I (Gupta year 117) illustrates an early stage in this process.

Gopinath Rao gives an exhaustive account of the various types of Śivaliṅgas and their classifications on the basis of various Śaiva *āgamas* and other texts.[1] I shall only make

[1] Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 75-99.

some observations on a few of the types, for it will be impossible for me to incorporate much about the individual groups of Śaiva emblems and images in the first part of Chapter XI of this book. The *Makuṭāgama* classifies the Sthiraliṅgas (*acala* or *dhruva*, *i.e.*, immovable or permanently fixed) into four classes, the Daivika, the Ārṣaka, the Gāṇapa and the Mānuṣa, whereas the *Kāmikāgama* groups them under six heads,—the Svāyambhuva, the Daivika, the Ārṣaka, the Gāṇapatya, the Mānuṣa and the Bāṇalingas. Students of iconography are not much concerned with most of these classes, the last two only of the second list being necessary for study. The Bāṇaliṅgas are natural objects like the Śālagrāmas, and are also fished out of a particular river-bed like the latter. They are mostly picked up from the river Revā or Narmadā, one of the seven most sacred rivers of the Hindus, as the Śālagrāmas (specially associated with Vaiṣṇavism) are procured from the bed of the Gaṇḍakī, a tributary of the Ganges in the north. These are the types of emblems which many Śaivas carry on their body and offer daily worship to them. The Mānuṣa or manmade liṅgas from the largest group of the Sthiraliṅgas, and are made up of three parts known as Brahmabhāga, Viṣṇubhāga and Rudrabhāga.[1] The first is the square lowest section, the second, the octagonal middle one, while the third or the topmost one is generally cylindrical. Rudrabhāga is known also by the name of Pūjābhāga, for the offerings of water, flower and other objects are usually put on its top; the two other sections are inserted inside the pedestal (*pīṭhikā*) and the ground. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, though it does not give us the names of these sections, supplies us the same information, and adds one more to the effect that the periphery of the *piṇḍikā* or *pīṭhikā* would be the same as the height of the

[1] Some textual descriptions of pillars or columns of the late Gupta or early mediaeval period refer to their sections as Brahmakāṇḍa, Viṣṇukāṇḍa and Rudrakāṇḍa; *cf. Mānasara*, ch. 15. Stambhalakṣaṇam, vv. 10-11; the verses read *Caturasram Brahmakāṇḍam syādaṣṭāsraṃ Viṣṇukāṇḍakam | Ṣoḍaśāsraṃ tu vṛttamvā Rudrākāṇḍamiti smṛtam* (Acharya wrongly puts the word as *kānto*).

cylindrical portion.[1] It should be noted that the author does not refer to the original phallic character of the emblem, and it is presumable that either its full conventionalisation had taken place by his time or more probably he did not want to say anything about it. The carving of certain lines technically known as *brahmasūtras* on the Rudrabhāga of the emblem is enjoined in some later iconographic texts; this is nothing but a device to demarcate the nut from the shaft. It is interesting to note that according to *Makuṭāgama*, the *brahmasūtra* design is not to be shown in the Daivika and Ārṣaka Liṅgas, *i.e.*, those associated with the Devas and the divine Ṛṣis; but it must be present on Mānuṣa Liṅgas which are made by human hands according to canons laid down in Śaiva Śāstras (*Śivaśāstroktamārgeṇa śirovartanayā yutaṃ| Brahmasūtra samāyuktametanmānuṣamucyate*). In some Śivaliṅgas of the early mediaeval period the *brahmasūtra* lines are incised, but in many later specimens they are seldom emphasised. The Mānuṣa liṅgas are grouped under various heads on the basis of different criteria. One method is based on the measurements of the three sections of the emblem, the names varying as their proportions differ; some of these names are Sarvasama, Vardhamāna, Svastika, Sārvadeśika, Trairāśika, etc. Several classes of Śivaliṅgas are distinguished by such names as Dhārāliṅga, Aṣṭottaraśataliṅga or Sahasraliṅga, chiefly on the basis of the different ways of modelling their Rudrabhāga. If the cylindrical shaft of a Mānuṣaliṅga has fluted facets, it is called Dhārāliṅga, the number of the vertical flutes according to the *Suprabhedāgama* being five, seven, nine, twelve, sixteen, twenty-four and twenty-eight (*Pañcadhārāssaptadhārā navadvādaśadhārakaḥ| Dhārāṣṣoḍaśaviṃśacca triraṣṭāvāṣṭāviṃśatiḥ*). The flutes on such emblems served the purpose of draining the water poured on their top, which

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57. 53-4: *Liṅgasya vṛttaparidhiṃ dairghyeṇāsūtrya tat tridhā vibhajet | Mūle taccaturasraṃ madhye traṣṭāsri vṛttamataḥ || Caturasramavanīkhāte madhyaṃ kāryaṃ tu piṇḍikāśvabhre | Dṛśyocchrāyeṇa samā samantataḥ piṇḍikāśvabhrāt.* Utpala clearly explains the sense of the last line in this way—*Yāvatpramāṇaṃ vṛttabhāgasya dairghyaṃ tāvatpramāṇaṃ samantataḥ pīṭhikāpṛthutvaṃ kāryamiti ||*

then was ejected through the *nāla* projection of the *pīṭhikā*. The Aṣṭottaraśata- and the Sahasra-liṅgas, as their names indicate, are those on the Rudrabhāga of which are carved 108 or 1000 emblems by the incision of parallel horizontal and vertical lines, and by chamfering the edges of the resultant criss-cross sections. Multiple representations of the emblem are regarded as very pious by a Śaiva devotee, and sometimes 108 Śivaliṅgas designated by 108 of the numerous names of Mahādeva are installed in concentric rows of separate shrines. Mukhaliṅgas constitute another class of Māṇuṣaliṅgas, conventional in character, and as a class much later than the types of the realistic liṅgas like Guḍimallam (the Dhārā-, Aṣṭottaraśata- and Sahasra-liṅgas are also of later origin). They denote those emblems which show on their Rudra- or Pūjā-bhāgas one or more human faces (the faces standing for one or more aspects of Śiva). The *Kāraṇāgama* lays down that ' the face should be 13½ *aṅgulas* in length, and the number of the faces should be 5, 4, 3 or 1 ; Mukhaliṅga with four faces should have them facing four quarters, a three-faced one should not have a face on its back, and a one-faced one should have the face placed a little high up '. There is also some textual injunction about the number of faces being determined by the number of doors of the central shrine. But it is doubtful whether it was always followed. The Rūpamaṇḍaṇa writes about three-, one- and four-faced Mukhaliṅgas; ' in a one-faced type the face should be shown in front, and in a three-faced one, the back face is absent. In a four-faced variety, the western face is white, the northern red, the southern face black and terrific, while the eastern face is of the colour of a well-kindled fire. The (five) faces stand for the five aspects of Śiva—Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and the fifth Īśāna which is beyond the comprehension of even the Yogīs '.[1] But it

[1] *Rūpamaṇḍana* as quoted by Rao—*Mukhaliṅgaṃ trivaktraṃ syādekavaktraṃ caturmukham | Sammukhaṃ caikavaktraṃ syāt trivaktre pṛṣṭhake na hi ‖ Paścimāsyaṃ sthitaṃ śubhraṃ kuṅkumābhaṃ tathottare | Yāmyaṃ kṛṣṇakarālaṃ cyātprācyaṃ dīptāgnisannibham‖ Sadyo Vāmaṃ tath-Āghoraṃ Tatpuruṣaṃ caturthakam | Pañcamaṃ ca tatheśānaṃ yogīnāmapyagocaram ‖*

should be noted that though the *Kāraṇāgama* refers to a five-faced Śivaliṅga by the epithet *śarānanaṃ* (*śara* means arrow, and the number of Cupid's arrows is five), it does not refer to the position of the fifth face. The *Rūpamaṇḍana* does not mention such a type, for the fifth, *i.e.*, the Īśāna face, is beyond the ken even of the Yogīs (*pañcamaṃ ca tatheśānaṃ yogīnāmapyagocaram*). The extant specimens of Mukhaliṅgas usually show one, three and four faces carved on the Pūjābhāga or Rudrabhāga; they hail from all parts of India, and the earliest of them seldom goes prior to the early Gupta period. Exhibit No. 42 in the Lucknow Museum is an interesting specimen of the Ekamukha type ; the realism is very much subdued (it is of the Gupta period), and it is curious to note that the third eye is horizontally placed in the centre of the forehead (in the heads of Śiva the position of the third eye is usually vertical, Indra's third eye being shown horizontally). Though no text known to me describes a Dvimukha Liṅga, one sculpture in the collection of the Mathura Museum seems to me to represent this variety. The third eye (placed here also horizontally) and the *jaṭāmukuṭa* on the two Janiform heads on the shaft apparently establish the identity of the sculpture; the faces, curiously enough, have moustaches. One unique variety in red sandstone (also in the Mathura Museum collection) consists of four shafts joined together, with one face on the top section of each of them; there appears to have been some attempt to demarcate the nut from the shaft, but the result has not been sufficiently realistic. The hair of the four heads is arranged differently. Diskalkar describes it as a Pañcamukha Liṅga and dates it in the first century A.D., but there is no certainty whether there ever was another head on the top of the sculpture, and on stylistic and other grounds it can be assigned to the late Kushan period.[1]

The Guḍimallam Liṅga and the Mukhaliṅgas illustrate in a way the combined mode of representing Śiva both in his

[1] For illustration of these three sculptures, *cf. J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. III, 1935, Pl. VII, Figs. 2-4.

human as well as phallic form. Coomaraswamy illustrates an interesting Mathura sculpture of the late Kushan period, in which a four-armed standing figure of Śiva is carved on one side of a long pillar like emblem; the natural hands of the god are shown in *abhaya* and *kaṭyavalambita* poses, while the added ones are raised and placed on his *jaṭās* (*op. cit.*, Fig. 68). References to the presence of Śiva on columnar altars are to be found in the earlier sections of the *Mahābhārata*. Thus, in its Kirātārjunīya episode, Arjuna is described as worshipping Bhava (Śiva) with a garland after making an earthen altar (as the divine symbol) (II. 39. 65—*Śaraṇyaṃ śaraṇaṃ gatvā bhagavantaṃ pināķinam Mṛṇmayaṃ sthaṇḍilaṃ kṛtvā mālyenāpūjayadbhavam*). Aśvatthāmā, on his nocturnal journey to the Pāṇḍava camp to murder the five Pāṇḍava brothers, is confronted by a gigantic figure at the gate; he then invokes the aid of Śiva, his patron deity, and there appears before him a huge golden altar with all-spreading flames of fire on it.[1] This concept of the sudden appearance of a flaming golden altar or pillar before Aśvatthāmā leads one to the consideration of the Liṅgodbhavamūrti of Śiva. The mythology connected with this type of Śaiva image, a combination of the god's human as well as his columnar form (he is also called Sthānu), relates how Brahmā and Viṣṇu were at one time disputing their individual claims for the creation of the universe. Śiva suddenly appeared before them in the form of a blazing column of fire. Brahmā and Viṣṇu tried respectively to find its top and bottom, but they failed. Brahmā, however, falsely asserted that he had succeeded in his effort, for which falsehood Śiva cursed him never to have a cult of his own. Viṣṇu confessed his inability to find the ground of the column; Śiva, who had in the meanwhile become manifest in it, blessed him to have his own cult almost equal in

[1] *Mahābhārata*, X. 7. 13-14: *Iti tasya vyāvasitaṃ jñātvodyogāt svakarmanaḥ | Purastāt kāñcanī vedī prādurāsīnmahātmanaḥ || Tasyāṃ vedyāṃ tadā rājaṃścitrabhānurajāyata | Sa śiśoridiśuḥ khaṃca. jvālābhirabhipūrayan ||*

importance to that of himself. This theme, undoubtedly evincing a sectarian bias, was very much popular with the Indian artists of the early and late mediaeval periods. Rao has illustrated three reliefs in illustration of this theme, from Conjeevaram, Ellora and Ambar Mangalam. The Chola sculpture being illustrated here is from the Bṛhadīśvara Temple of Tanjore; it depicts the story in the usual but a summary manner. The worshipping figures of Brahmā and Śiva on either side of the flaming pillar as in the sculpture from Daśāvatāra cave Ellora (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pl. XIV, Fig. 1) are absent; but the four-armed Candraśekharamūrti of Śiva with *paraśu* and *mṛga* in his back hands, the front ones being in the *abhaya* and *kaṭyavalambita* poses, is beautifully carved inside an elliptical cavity on the surface of the column which is decorated with a festoon design on its top. Brahmā is shown flying up in its top left corner, and the boar-faced Viṣṇu is depicted burrowing down below (Pl. XXXI, Fig. 4). The south Indian reliefs of Liṅgodbhavamūrtī are usually of the Ellora and Tanjore types. The motif is not very common in Northern India, but reference may be made here to one very interesting sculpture illustrating the theme, which is now in the collection of the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer. The long slender column on which Śiva's figure is depicted has the figures of Brahmā and Viṣṇu depicted on its sides in the act of soaring upwards and coming downwards respectively, and there are some accessory figures clustering round the central object; Brahmā and Viṣṇu are again shown as respectful attendants of Śiva (*J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. IX, Pl. X). The emblem itself enshrined in the main sanctum of many south Indian shrines looks like a huge column of a very wide growth (*cf.* those in Bṛhadīśvara Temple, Tanjore, Kṣitiliṅga at Śiva-Kānchi, Jyotirliṅga at Tiruvanamalai, etc.). It may be incidentally suggested here that the erection of columns or upright stones to commemorate one's ancestors was a funerary practice common not only to the people of ancient India, but also to many other ancient nations of the world. It appears that this practice had also

something to do with the growth and development of the phallic cult in India.

The aniconic and aniconic-iconic forms of Śiva have been discussed at some length in the preceding pages, and it is now time to study some of his representations in his two-, four- or multi-armed human forms, occasionally showing more than one head. These images can first be classified under two broad heads, those depicting his *ugra* or *ghora* (terrific) aspect, and the others illustrating his *saumya* or *śānta* (peaceful) one. Each of these groups again can be generally subdivided under two broad heads on the basis of their illustrating myths commonly associated with the god, or not. Those that are not primarily associated with any particular Śivaite story retain the early form, an idea about which we can have from the many representations of the god on ancient Indian coins and seals. Such images of the peaceful category have been given various names mainly of a descriptive character in the iconographic texts collected in the Śaiva Āgamas. Thus names like Candraśekhara, Umāsahita, Āliṅgana Candraśekhara, Vṛṣavāhana, Sukhāsana, Umā-Maheśvara, Somā-Skanda, etc., explain the different varieties of Śaiva images. The first three in this list depict the god standing either alone or in company with his consort Umā (actually embracing her), while the second three depict him as seated in ease either alone or accompanied by Uma and sometimes by both Umā and Skanda (sa-Umā-Skanda : Somā-Skanda). Other graceful or placid forms of Śiva are described in the various Śaiva Āgamas under such names as Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Nṛtyamūrti, etc., which portray the god as the master in the various arts of dancing, playing on

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. III, 1935, pp. 7-9. I endorsed there Fuhrer's explanation of the Bhita sculpture as ' the capital of a column '. The five faces on it were explained by me as symbolising the ' sons of Khajahuti ' to commemorate whom the ' Column ' was erected or installed (*Khajahutiputānāṃ lagō patiṭhāpito*) by Nāgasiri, the son of Vāseṭhi. The phallic sign carved in outline on one part of it can be explained by referring to an observation of Grant Allan : ' On many grave-stones of early date a phallus marked the male sex of the occupant ' and the stone being regarded as the ancestor of the family, it is not unnatural that early men should some times carve it into a phallic shape ' (*The Evolution of the Idea of God*, p. 68).

musical instruments, expounding the śāstras, and practising the Yoga. Śiva Naṭarāja (the ' king of the dancers ') dances various types of dance, such as Nādānta or Tāṇḍava, Lalita, Lalāṭatilaka, Kaṭisama, Talasamsphoṭita, etc., the *karaṇas* of which are described in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Śiva as the greatest teacher of *yoga*, of *vīṇā* (lute or gourd with strings), of *jñāna* (knowledge) and *vyākhyāna* (expounding the śāstras) is known by such names as Yoga-Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Vīṇādhara-Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Jñāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrti. Another group of images depicting his placid aspect, but not any particular mythology, are his Ardhanārīśvara and Hari-Hara or Haryarddha forms which attempt to emphasise in a way the syncretism of the central deities of different cults, Śaiva, Śākta and Vaiṣṇava. Some Śaiva images, mostly evolved in south India in mediaeval times, are intended to illustrate in an esoteric manner some of the principal tenets of Āgamānta Śaivism or Śuddha Śaivism; they are known by such names as Sadāśivamūrti, Mahā-Sadāśivamūrti and Maheśamūrti. Lastly, mention should also be made of the image of his ' twenty-eighth incarnation ', Lakulīśa who, as we have already shown earlier, was responsible for systematising the Pāśupata creed. Lakulīśa images are very seldom found in Southern India, but they are frequent in Orissa in the east and Gujrat and Kathiawar Peninsula in the west.

The images of the *ghora* or *ugra* form, which are not associated with any particular story narrating the exploits of Śiva, can be called Bhairava, Aghora, Raudra-Pāśupata, Vīrabhadra, Virupākṣa, and Kaṅkāla. Bhairava is sometimes described as Brahmaśirasśchedakamūrti (of Śiva) in some of the Purāṇas and Śaiva Āgamas ; these texts try to explain this aspect of Śiva as cutting off one of the heads of the polycephalous Brahmā, for his alleged sins and iniquities. But there is very little tangible connection between these varying myths and iconic types. The Āgamic texts enumerate as many as sixty-four Bhairavas divided in eight groups of eight each, the leaders of these groups being

Asitāṅga, Ruru, Caṇḍa, Krodha, Unmatta-Bhairava, Kapāla, Bhīṣaṇa and Saṁhāra respectively. They are the consorts or guardians of the sixty-four Yoginīs mentioned in the Tāntric texts. The particular type of Bhairava usually found in Northern India goes by the name of Baṭuka (' youthful ') Bhairava. He is nude, terrific in appearance with protruding fangs, rolling and round eyes, and his hands hold such objects as a sword, a *khaṭvāṅga*, a *śūla* or a *kapāla*; he usually wears wooden sandals, and is often shown accompanied by a dog. A less terrific type of image of the deity is his Kaṅkālamūrti, in which he carries on the prongs of his trident, the skeleton of Viṣvaksena, the gate-keeper of Viṣṇu, who was killed by Śiva for his refusal to admit him into the presence of Viṣṇu. Such images of the late mediaeval period are comparatively common in Southern India. Bhikṣāṭanamūrti of Śiva, mythologically associated with the Kaṅkālamūrti, is, however, of a placid type. It shows the god as a wandering youth of the untouchable order, usually nude, holding a *kapāla* in one of his hands, and is sometimes accompanied by a frisking deer.[1]

Before a brief account is given of the other broad group of Śaiva icons, both of the *saumya* or *ugra* type, which very characteristically illustrate stories connected with Śiva performing acts of *anugraha* (grace) or *saṃhāra* (destruction), it is necessary to study a few reliefs of the early and late mediaeval period, representing the ' non-mythological ' groups of Śaiva icons. Gopinath Rao describes three types of Candraśekharamūrtis as the Kevalamūrti, the Umāsahitamūrti and the Āliṅganamūrti on the basis of *Aṃśumadbhedāgama* and other Śaiva Āgamas, and illustrates them mostly by late mediaeval bronze and stone sculptures from Southern India (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pls. XV-XX). Kevala Candraśekhara denotes those images of this type, in which the god is shown alone; in the Umāsahita- and Āliṅgana-Candra-

[1] Rao has described and illustrated most of these varieties of Śaiva images in his monumental work, Vol. II, pp. 105 ff. and plates. He has not given any account of the Lakulīśa images, probably for the reason that they are not common in Southern India.

śekharamūrtis, the god either stands with Umā by his side or he lovingly embraces his consort. Śiva is called by this name for the presence of the crescent moon on his *jaṭās* (Candraśekhara, Śaśāṅkaśekhara), and in these mediaeval south Indian images he holds *paraśu* and *mṛga* in his back right and left hands respectively, his front ones being shown in the *abhaya* and the *varada* poses (*cf.* the passage in his *dhyāna*: *paraśumṛgavarābhītīhastam*). Such images are usually decorated with ornaments. Two interesting sculptures from Eastern and Northern India are being illustrated here, which, though not tallying closely with the south Indian group just mentioned, may yet be considered along with them. The beautiful four-armed figure of Śiva from Khiching shows the god standing gracefully with a slight bend in his body (*ābhaṅga*), holding a *kapāla* in his front left hand; his back right hand holds a rosary; the front right one is broken, while the back left hand, the palm of which is gone, must have held a *triśūla* (its three pronged top is quite distinct on the top corner). The god stands on the pericarp of a double-petalled lotus with two gracefully poised female attendants carrying jars (of wine or poison) on his either side. The finely carved ornaments, the beautifully arranged *jaṭāmukuṭa*, the very elegantly displayed halo, the well-balanced scroll designs on the two sides and the lower part of the *prabhāvalī*, the exquisite modelling of the main figure and its attendants, and, above all, the sublime expression of pleasant contemplation on the divine face mark the sculpture as one of the finest examples of Indian art (Pl. XXXII, Fig. 1). In marked contrast to this remarkable specimen of sculptural art of mediaeval Orissa, stands the Hara-Pārvatī from Kosam, of a far earlier (Gupta) date, strikingly simple and unconventional. The ithyphallic god stands facing with a slight bend of the body, holding a flask in his left hand (*cf.* the nectar flask in the hand of the earlier Maitreya figures) with Umā on his left; the goddess holds a *darpaṇa* in her left hand, and though the ornaments on the figures are sparse, the Gupta sculptor took particular care to give a character to the head-gear of the

divine couple. Their faces are not devoid of expression, but none of the sublime introspection of the Khiching sculpture is present there. The inscription on the pedestal bears a date in the reign of Kumāragupta I (Pl. XXXVIII, Fig. 2). A still earlier red sandstone relief of Hara-Pārvatī or Umāsahitamūrti of Śiva is to be found in the Mathura Museum. It shows the divine couple leaning on Nandī; Śiva is ithyphallic, and both the god and the goddess hold *nīlotpala* buds in their hands. This is one of the earliest sculptural representations of the god in his aspect of Umāsahitamūrti. It will be of interest to compare and contrast these Hara-Pārvatī images with the south Indian Āliṅgana-Candraśekharamūrti from the Bṛhadīśvara Temple at Tanjore, reproduced here. The four-armed god stands to front with a slight bend, his front left hand clasping Umā, the other three hands holding a *ṭaṅka* (?), *paraśu* and a *mṛga* from the lower right onwards; the goddess stands demurely on his left, her right and left hands being in the *vismaya* and *kaṭihasta* poses. Though there appears to be a somewhat hard expression on the Devī's face, the god's face bears a deep penetrating expression; the head-gear, ornaments and garments of the two divine figures are convincingly displayed. This is a good specimen of the Chola art in its best days (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 3). The Aihole sculpture of Vṛṣavāhanamūrti of Śiva shows the four-armed god standing in a *dvibhaṅga* pose and reclining on his mount, his back right hand holding a *triśūla* and the front left hand, a snake, the front right hand rests in the *varada* pose on the horn of the vivacious bull, the back left hand being indistinct. The facial expression of the god is not very distinctive but its lack of character seems to be much compensated by the vigorous expression of the bull mount (Pl. XXXIV, Fig. 3). The three-faced four-armed Śiva seated on his mount Nandī in the *sukhāsana* pose in an intaglio in the Pearse Collection, now in the Indian Museum, is one of the earliest *āsana* type images of this god. The hair arrangement on two sides of the central face, the *jaṭā* knobs on all the three heads, the flames issuing from the shoulders, the halo encircling the

three-heads and the pronouncedly 'muscular treatment' of the body,—all characterise the figure as having been carved in the best Gandhāran tradition, and it may belong to the late Kushan period. The back right and left hands of the god hold a *triśūla* and *pāśa* respectively, while the front right and left ones rest on the butt of the *gadā* and the neck of his mount; the animal is shown in a suggestively restful pose (Pl. XXXIV, Fig. 1). The rock-cut shrines of Ellora contain some very interesting panels showing the divine couple seated side by side in the company of a host of attendants on either side, with Nandī below surrounded by a number of impish Śivagaṇas playing pranks. Just one step removed from these sculptures are the Umā-Maheśvaramūrtis where Pārvatī is shown seated on the left thigh of her consort who is caressing her with one of his hands; their respective mounts, a bull and a lion, are carved on the pedestal, on whom rest their two legs. Bloch, while describing the Kosam Hara-Pārvatī relief, remarked, 'it is instructive to compare the stiff and conventional manner of treatment in this older image with the suggestive posture of the divine couple in the later statues'.[1] This is the suggestive pose mentioned by Bloch, and the greater frequency of such sculptures in Eastern India is undoubtedly associated with the prevalence of Śāktism in the region. The Tāntric worshippers of Tripurasundarī, another name of Umā or Pārvatī, are required to meditate on the Devī as seated on the lap of Śiva in the Mahāpadmavana (*Saundaryalaharī*, vv. 40 ff.), and these images were used by them as aids for the correct performance of the *dhyānayoga*. One relief from Khiching, reproduced here, illustrates the theme in a very characteristic manner. The two-armed ithyphallic god is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose clasping with his left hand the Devī seated on his left thigh; his right hand holds a trident; in the centre of the marked-off pedestal below sits four-armed Gaṇeśa, and a bull couchant and a stylised lion are shown on either side of Gaṇeśa. This sculpture seems

1 T. Bloch. *Supplementary Catalogue of the Archaeological Collection of the Indian Museum*, pp. 86-7.

to show the attempt of a mediaeval exponent of Orissan folk-art to portray an orthodox hieratic motif in his own way; the stylised lion mount of the Devī should be particularly noted in this connection (Pl. XXXIX, Fig. 2). In this Khiching relief, Gaṇapati (according to one set of Purāṇic tales the favourite son of Śiva and Umā) is shown accompanying his parents, but he is not shown by their side, appearing only as an 'accessory' on the pedestal. The Somā-Skandamūrtis of Śiva, on the other hand, mainly in bronze, depict the figures of Śiva and Umā seated side by side usually on separate pedestals, with the child Skanda shown either standing, or more frequently dancing, between his parents. These bronzes are typically south Indian (no north Indian bronze or stone figure of this type is known), and portray in a characteristic manner the great loving adoration for child Subrahmaṇya (known in Tamil as Murugan) and his parents which the southerners cherished, and still cherish.

The etymology of the name 'Dakṣiṇāmūrti' has been explained by Rao on the basis of some texts in this manner: 'because Śiva was seated facing south when he taught the sages *yoga* and *jñāna* he came to be known as Dakṣiṇāmūrti'.[1] But, as he has himself pointed out, 'Dakṣiṇāmūrti is viewed in four different aspects, namely as a teacher of *yoga*, of *jñāna*, of *vīṇā*, and as also an expounder of other śāstras' (this is Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrti). I have already suggested that on this consideration, the dancing images of this god may be grouped under this head, for as 'the king of the dancers' (Naṭarāja) he was the greatest exponent of the science and art of dancing. The Yoga-, Jñāna- and Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrtis of Śiva are mostly south Indian in character, and Rao's attempt at explaining two of the Pārśvadevatās in a niche of the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogarh (Jhansi District, Uttar Pradesh) as Jñāna- and Yoga-Dakṣiṇāmūrtis of Śiva has been proved to be wrong, the figures really standing for Nara and Nārāyaṇa, the two

[1] Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 278.

Avatāras of Viṣṇu (*cf. supra*, p. 254, f.n. 4). Such images from different regions of the south illustrated by Rao are mostly hieratic with little artistic merit of their own; but three such images from Tiruvorriyur and Viṣṇu-Kāñcī (Conjeevaram) illustrated by Rao (Vol. II, Pls. LXXVI-LXXVIII) have a character of their own. In one of the Viṣṇu-Kāñcī sculptures the god's bent left leg kept in position by a *yoga-paṭṭa* rests on his right thigh, his back right hand holds an *akṣamālā* (*akṣabalayas* are also on his arms as ornaments) and the front left hand is in the *vitarkamudrā*; the god is sitting under a banyan tree on a raised seat, below which are two deer; sages cluster round the god listening to his preaching of the *dharma* or *yoga*. The front right hand of the four-armed god from Tiruvorriyur is in the *vitarkamudrā*, and the legs are locked in the *padmāsana* pose. These compositions not only remind one of the Buddhist composition of the Master's Enlightenment and First Sermon, but also proves that the author of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* must have had some such Śivaite reliefs in his mind when he described the visit of the gods to Śiva seated in his mountain abode Kailāsa.[1] A terracotta plaque of the late Gupta period found among the ruins of an ancient Śiva temple at Ahicchatrā (Bareilly Dist., U.P.) appears to depict the reposeful ascetic form of Śiva as Jñāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrti. The four-armed god seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose holds a rosary in the back right hand and a vase with foliage in the left; the lower right hand (broken) seems to have been either in the *jñāna* or *vyākhyāna* pose (if it was in the latter, the figure should be called Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrti), the front left hand resting on the thigh. There are two figures on the left of the god, one male, and the other female with its hands in the *namaskāra mudrā;* the female figure may stand for Pārvatī who, according to the *Kumārasambhava* story, waited upon Śiva while he was performing austerities in his

[1] *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, IV. 6, 33-9: *Dadṛśuḥ Śivamāsīnaṃ tyaktamarṣamivāntakam | Sanandanādyairmahāsiddhaiḥ śāntaiḥ saṃśāntavigraham‖ ....Kṛtvorau dakṣiṇe savyaṃ pādapadmaṁca jānuni | Bāhum prakoṣṭhe akṣāmālāmāsīnaṃ tarkamudrayā‖*

hermitage before his marriage with her. The male figure may represent one of the Śivagaṇas, with its right hand raised in the praising pose (Pl. VII, Fig. 3; this plaque was first noticed by V. S. Agrawala in *Ancient India*, No. IV, 1947-48, pp. 169-70, Fig. 3). Pl. XXXV, Fig. 2, is a fine sculpture from Orissa (Puri), which depicts the four-armed god Śiva as playing on a *vīṇā* (it is broken, traces only are visible); the four-armed ithyphallic (?) god is gracefully seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose on a raised seat, holding the musical instrument in his front two hands; the bull Nandī listens to its master in rapt attention, with its head raised towards him. Rao illustrates this type by two bronzes, one from Vadarangam, and the other from the Madras Museum collection; in both these sculptures the god is shown in a standing pose (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pls. LXXIX and LXXX).

The Nṛtyamūrtis of Śiva were well prevalent in all parts of India, but it had many well-marked varieties in Southern India. Out of the latter was developed there an outstanding type, the bronze Naṭarāja Śiva, a sublime creation in the domain of universal art. The Ellora and Chidambaram temples, as well as many other Śaiva shrines of the south contain figures of Śiva shown in various dance poses, some of which have been mentioned above.[1] Rao says, 'In all Śiva temples of importance a separate place is allotted to Naṭarāja, which is known as the *Naṭana Sabhā* or simply as *Sabhā*. The most important of these *Sabhās* is that at Chidambaram' (*Ibid.*, p. 229). The Nādānta dance mode of Śiva Naṭarāja shows him with his right leg firmly planted on the back of the wriggling Mūyaḷaka (Apsmārapurūṣa, the evil personified), his left leg raised high up in a slant, his front left hand in the *dola-* or *gaja-hasta* pose pointing to the raised foot, the front right hand in the

[1] Some of them have been described and illustrated by Rao (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 253 ff. and Pls. LXI-LXX). 108 kinds of dances carved on either side of a *gopura* in the Chidambaram temple of Naṭarāja correspond to a great extent with the 108 dance-modes as described by Bharata in his *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Manomohan Ghosh has brought out an authoritative English translation of this work with an introduction and some notes (Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1952).

abhaya pose, the back right and left hands carrying a kettle-drum and a ball of fire respectively; the whole composition is placed on a well-decorated pedestal where the ends of the circular or elliptical *prabhā* (*tiruvasi* in Tamil) meet. The Tamil text called *Unmai-viḷakkam* explains the symbolism underlying this cosmic dance of the great god in this manner: "Creation arises from the drum: protection proceeds from the hand of hope (the *abhaya* pose in the front right one): from fire proceeds destruction: the foot held aloft gives *mukti*".[1] Thus, in a way it practically embraces all the five-fold activities of the Lord, (*pañcakṛtyas* mentioned above), the *tiruvasi* round him symbolising the act of obscuration (*tirobhāva*). The French savant Romain Rolland describes it as an example of supreme synthesis. "All is harmonised. All the forces of life are grouped like a forest, whose thousand waving arms are led by Naṭarāja, the master of dance. Everything has its place, every being has its function, and all take part in the divine concert, their different voices, and their very dissonances creating, in the phrase of Heraclitus, a most beautiful harmony".[2]

Five varieties of dancing images of Śiva, all in stone, are illustrated here. With one exception, they hail from the south. Pl. XXXIV, Fig. 4, follows in general outline the bronze Naṭarāja type; it is a stone sculpture and has some additional details. Four figurines are carved on the pedestal, among whom an emaciated goddess (Cāmuṇḍī) and Gaṇapati can be recognised; a miniature figure of the eight-armed dancing goddess can be seen in the right side of the god balanced by another such figure of a male deity in the left; there are faint traces of flying and other figurines on the upper part of the *prabhā*. As the material is stone, the raised leg is made to rest on a slender stone projection, for its safety. The ecstasy of the divine dancer has been very beautifully portrayed by the Chola artist of Gangaikonda-

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy has quoted this passage in his *Dance of Śiva* (p. 87), where he explains the sublime ideology underlying this noble art creation.

[2] Rolland's deep appreciation of this sublime art motif was noticed by me in *Introducing India*, Part I (Asiatic Society), p. 20.

cholapuram. The eight-armed Śiva dancing in a different mode which is called Kaṭisama by Rao on the authority of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* is reproduced in Pl. XXXVII, Fig. 1. The relief hails from Ellora, and depicts in a characteristic manner the sublime concentration of the deity even while engaged in the rhythmic movement of dance; watchful figures clustering round him in awe-struck wonder heighten the whole effect of the composition. A comparison of this figure with the sixteen-armed Nṛtyamūrti of the god hailing from Badami, Cave No. 1 (Pl. XXXVI, Fig. 2), emphasises the following traits of the latter. The divine body in the *atibhaṅga* pose of a peculiar dance-mode described by Rao as Catura bears the stamp of extreme exaggeration in the matter of its numerous arms flung on all sides, the hands holding different weapons or objects, or showing different poses; but the facial expression never loses its serenity of deep concentration. Only three attendants are shown on the lower part of the relief (the upper part is broken), the bull Nandī standing calmly on the left, the right side being occupied by standing Gaṇeśa and a seated figure playing on two drums; the numerous attendants in the Ellora figure mentioned above are to some extent counterbalanced in this relief by the display of the gyrating arms. It should be noted here that in both these reliefs, there is no wriggling Apasmārapuruṣa beneath the legs of the god. Compared with these two sublime art-creations of the 6th and the 8th centuries A.D. (the Badami figure is of the 6th, while the Ellora one is of the 8th century A.D.), the Nṛtyamūrti of Śiva reproduced in Pl. XXXVII, Fig. 2, shows elaborate ornamentation; there are many accessory figures on the lower part of the composition. The ten-armed god, almost fully shown in the round, dances on the prostrate figure of the Apasmārapuruṣa with a six-armed deity playing on musical instruments on the extreme left, and Pārvatī and her attendants watching the dance from the extreme right; miniature figures of dancing Gaṇeśa and the emaciated goddess can be recognised on the right and the left. The ends of the extremely ornate trefoil *toraṇa* with a small

canopy in the middle hanging from the grinning *kīrttimukha* over the head of the central deity come out of the open-mouthed makaras on either side; there are delicately carved miniature shrines above these makaras containing seated deities, and dancing *kīcakas* singing and playing on musical instruments inside ornamental scroll beneath the whole composition. It should be noted that this Śiva Naṭarāja is the central piece of a big rectangular relief having on its either side the ornate figures of Brahmā and Viṣṇu. The sculpture hails from Hampi (it is now in the National Museum, Delhi) and stands in a way at the threshold of the later highly ornamental schools of carving. There is no doubt that the severe and sublime grandeur of the other three south Indian stone reliefs, just discussed, are absent in this sculpture, but the extreme delicacy and gracefulness of its carving cannot but evoke our great admiration for the artistic skill of the sculptor. The early mediaeval artists of Bengal, on the other hand, evolved a very strikingly original type of Śiva Naṭarāja. It shows the ten-armed god dancing on the back of the bull Nandī who looks at his lord with his head turned upwards (*devavīkṣaṇatatparaḥ*) and has one each of his front and hind legs raised as if he himself is also engaged in the very act of dancing; the two consorts of Śiva, Pārvatī and Gaṅgā, stand gracefully on their respective mounts (a lion and a makara) on the right and left, miniature figures of Devas, Nāgas and Gaṇas appear on the *prabhāvalī* and the *pīṭhikā*, in the role of the adoring onlookers of the divine dance. This description is based on the Naṭarāja found at Sankarbandha (Munsiganj, Dacca) and now in the Dacca Museum. It is one of the finest sculptures of Eastern India and seems to follow to some extent the description of Naṭarāja given in chapter 259 of the *Matsyapurāṇa* (Pl. XXXVII, Fig. 3).[1]

The Ardhanārīśvara and Haryardha images of Śiva fall also under the category of those that do not illustrate any

[1] For a very inferior copy of this image-type, see *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1930-34. Pl. CL, Fig. c.; it is a stone sculpture of the 11th-12th century A.D. found at Govindapur in the district of Twenty-four Perganas, West Bengal.

particular mythology and belong to the *saumya* aspect of the god. But at the same time they characterise the idea of cult syncretism in a very interesting manner. This aspect of these forms of Śiva will be treated in section II of the next Chapter (XII) of this book, where a few mediaeval reliefs illustrating them will be reproduced and described. It will be of interest in this connection to study one of the most well-known and oft-reproduced sculptures of Elephanta (Bombay) and ascertain its real nature. This early mediaeval relief of gigantic proportions carved with exquisite artistic skill on the surface of the back wall of the cave facing its entrance door was usually described as Trimūrti by earlier scholars. It shows a bust containing three faces, the central and right faces being placid in form, the left one being of a terrific character. The first two were tacitly assumed by previous scholars to stand for Viṣṇu and Brahmā, while the last for Rudra-Śiva; the composite icon illustrated, according to this view, the idea underlying the Brahmanical Triad. But this interpretation was rightly challenged by Gopinath Rao who suggested that it represented really an aspect of the god Śiva himself. But his description of it as Maheśamūrti of Śiva is not also quite correct (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 382-85, Pl. CXVII). Stella Kramrisch appears to have accepted Rao's identification, though she described it as 'the Mahādeva of Elephanta Island with Dvārapālas'; the central, right and left faces were named by her as Tatpuruṣa, Vāmadeva and Aghora respectively (*Ancient India*, No. II, 1946, pp. 4-8, Pls. I-VII). But none of these scholars appears to have understood the real nature of the face on the right, which is undoubtedly feminine in character. A careful study of the reproduction given in this book (Pl. XL, Fig. 1) will convince any one that the demure and downcast eyes with the finely drawn brows, the distinct pout of the lower lip, the receding chin, the jewelled curls tastefully arranged on the forehead and other features not only differentiate it from the other two faces, but also characterise it as the face of a female figure. This suggestion is further substantiated by

a sculpture of about the same age hailing from Padhvli (Madhya Bharat, now in the Gwalior Museum) which is also reproduced here (Pl XXXIX, Fig. 3). It also represents a three-faced bust, the placid central face and the terrific right face being masculine in character, the face on the left being feminine (the order of the arrangement of the faces in this relief is thus a little different from that of the Elephanta sculpture). The female face on the left is characterised by the peculiar hair-arrangement on its head, the tiny lotuses on the lower part of its coiffure, the particular ear-rings, the mirror in the hand associated with this face and other features. Thus, some at least of these three-faced sculptures of the early mediaeval times (another such relief from Madhya Bharat is also in the collection of the same Museum) really represent a composite form of Śiva where his two aspects, *saumya* and *ghora*, are combined with his Śakti Umā. Reference has already been made to the *Mahābhārata* passage emphasising his two *tanus* (forms), *śivā* and *ghorā*, and ancient and mediaeval poets like Kālidāsa and others never failed to refer to the primaeval divine parents of the universe in one breath (*jagataḥ pitarau...Pārvatī-Parameśvarau*, *Raghuvaṃśa*, I. 1). This idea about the composite aspect of Śiva seems to have spread beyond India in fairly early times, for at least one of the painted wooden panels found at Dandan-uiliq in Khotan represents the three-faced Śiva seated on his bull mount (here two bulls), the central being placid, the proper right one feminine, and the proper left terrific.[1] It should be noted that the so-called Trimūrti which seems to have been the central image of the cave-shrine at Elephanta is flanked on the proper right and proper left by the figures of Ardhanārīśvara and Gaṅgādhara aspects of the god.

It is time now to notice briefly a few Śaiva composite reliefs of the mediaeval period, which illustrate in a way

1 Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, Vol. I, p. 279, and Vol. II, Pl. LX; Stein describes the two side faces in this way: 'Right Proper, three quarter to right, effeminate, white, black hair, simple jewelled diadem. Left Proper, grotesque head, ferocious, dark flesh, eyeballs white, eyebrows thick and black, large mouth open'

some tenets of the Āgamānta Śaivas and the Śuddha Śaivas. A brief reference to the tenets has already been made in the earlier part of this chapter, a fairly elaborate account of which has been given by Gopinath Rao (*op cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 361-70). Two such reliefs only can be noticed here for exigencies of space, one hailing from the extreme east of India, the other from the extreme west. Pl. XL, Fig. 3, depicts a ten-armed and five-faced figure (three of the faces are distinct in the reproduction) of Sadāśivamūrti of Śiva seated in *padmāsana* on a double-petalled lotus on a tiered *pañcaratha* pedestal; the front right and left hands show poses not clearly recognisable, while the additional ones are shown holding either Śaiva emblems or weapons (one of the right hands is in the *varadamudrā* with a lotus mark on the palm); the miniature figures of one male and one female attendant are shown seated on either side of the god, and it is curious that the forepart of an elephant and two lions in profile are carved on three frontal facets of the top tier of the pedestal (the image is in the Rajshahi Museum). The five faces primarily represent the five aspects of Śiva, which are Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna, which in their turn are associated with five different Sadāśivatattvas or Sādākhyas known as Śivasādākhya, Amūrttasādākhya, Mūrttasādākhya, Kartṛsādākhya and Karmasādākhya. The esoterism of the Sadāśivatattva, to symbolise which these icons were made, is not clearly understandable from the images themselves, but their Āgamic description is partly followed in these sculptures. The Sena kings of Bengal, whose ancestors hailed from the south (Karṇāṭa country), were devout worshippers of this aspect of the god, and they used the figure of their chosen deity as their seal-device. The several Sadāśiva images of Southern India, which have been illustrated by Rao, are not very different from this 12th century A.D. relief illustrated here.[1] The other relief

[1] Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pls. CXIII, 1 and 2, CXV. The 'brick in mortar' Mahāsadāśivamūrti from Vaithisvarankoyil (Tanjore District), illustrated by him in Pl. CXIV, Fig. 2, is a curious 25-headed and 50-armed figure seated in *ardhaparyaṅka* pose; the heads are arranged in 5 rows or tiers of 9, 7, 5, 3 and 1

which was accidentally recovered some years ago in course of foundation excavations at Parel, a suburb of Bombay, has still remained an iconographic enigma. The curious composition shows a conglomeration of figures virtually in three rows, one vertical, and two other partly horizontal and partly parallel rows of 6 emanatory figures, all primarily and secondarily emanating from the full-length standing figure in the centre of the lower half of the relief. All the figures are two-armed, except the topmost one which seems to have four or more arms. The objects in most of their hands are indistinct, though the right hands of almost all of them are shown in the *abhayamudrā*. The elaborate *jaṭā-bhāras* on the head of all, and their general features appear to characterise the relief as Śaiva, and they may individually stand for the Mantreśvaras or the 'lords of the Śaiva

each. The Sadāśiva and Mahāsadāśivamūrtis of Śiva are supposed to illustrate in an esoteric manner 'the whole philosophy of the Śuddha-Śaiva School of Śaivism'. The Śaivasiddhāntins speak of 3 *tattvas*, Śiva, Sadāśiva and Maheśa, representing the *niṣkalā* ('subtle', 'formless'), *sakalā-niṣkalā* (*sthūla-sūkṣma* or 'having body or form and at the same time formless') and *sakalā* (*sthūla*, 'embodied', 'concrete') of the god. In the very beginning of pure creation (*suddhasṛṣṭi*), five Śaktis emanate from the *niṣkalā* aspect of the god in 'a chain of succession'; from Śiva emerges Parāśakti (Śāntyātītaśakti), from this Ādiśakti (Śāntiśakti), from it Icchāśakti (Vidyāśakti), from the preceding one Jñānaśakti (Pratiṣṭhāśakti) and from the last Kriyāśakti (Nivṛttiśakti). From these five Śaktis evolve in order five *tattvas* or *Sādākhyas*, *viz.*, the first Sadāśivatattva or Śivasādākhya, the second Sadāśivatattva or Amūrttasādākhya, the third Sadāśivatattva or the Mūrttasādākhya, the fourth Sadāśivatattva, the Kartṛsādākhya and the fifth Sadāśivatattva, the Karmasādākhya. These five Sādākhyas correspond in a manner to the five divine forms or aspects known as Vāmadeva, Tatpuruṣa, Aghora, Sadyojāta and Īśāna which are also collectively known as Pañcabrahmās (Īśānādayaḥ). The 28 Śaiva Āgamas (*Kāmikāgama* and others) are said to have been proclaimed in four groups of five and one group of eight from these 'faces' of the god (Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva and others typify the 'five' faces', or really 'four' for the 'Īśāna face' is invisible, of a Caturmukha Śivaliṅga). From the fifth or Karmasādākhya is evolved the Maheśamūrti of Śiva, which is the fountain—head of all the various Līlāmūrtis of the god. The latter have been enumerated by Rao as 25, and contain the names of most of the *ugra* and *saumya* types of Śaiva images (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 361-70).

Reference may be made in this connection to Haridas Mitra's elaborate article on 'Sadāśiva Worship in Bengal' (*J.R.A.S.B.*, N.S., Vol. XXIX, 1933, pp. 171-254, pls. 13-18).

Mantra-formulae ' described in the Śaiva Āgamas (Pl. XLI, Fig. 1).[1]

Reference may now be made to the representation of Lakulīśa, the 28th incarnation of Śiva according to some of the Purāṇas, who was the systematiser or organiser of the Pāśupata doctrine. The figures of Lakulīśa of the mediaeval period are very common in Western and Eastern India. One of his earliest representations was recognised by D. R. Bhandarkar in the inscribed pilaster found at Mathurā, in the lower part of which is carved a two-armed and three-eyed standing figure, with a club in his right hand and an indistinct object (probably a *kapāla*) in the left, and the sex mark shown beneath the diaphanous drapery. The inscription is of the time of Chandragupta II, and furnishes us with proofs about the authenticity of Lakulīśa tradition and his approximate date (*c.* 2nd century A.D.).[2] Two mediaeval reliefs of Lakulīśa are illustrated here, both hailing from Orissa; they belong to the early mediaeval period (9th-10th century A.D.), the first one being earlier of the two. Pl. XL, Fig. 4, reproduces a two-armed ithyphallic Lakulīśa (now in the collection of the Asutosh Museum) seated under a miniature trefoil arch in *vaddhapadmāsana* on a double-petalled lotus seat; his right arm is broken, his left hand holds a stout club resting against his left shoulder. The two miniature slightly pot-bellied figures seated by his side may stand for two of his four direct disciples. The other figure (Pl. XXXIX, Fig. 1) is the central piece of the

[1] The five formulas or Mantras are mentioned in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (X, 43-7) and in the *Mahānārāyaṇīya Upaniṣad*, 17. These are also associated by the commentator with the five aspects (Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva and others) of Śiva. If the Parel relief is explained thus, five only of the emanating figures may be connected with these five forms, the main figure then may represent Śiva Mantreśvara, and the remaining one on the top may represent Maheśvara aspect of the god. But this is only a tentative suggestion made on the basis of the characterisation of Pati, *i.e.*, Śiva as given in some Śaiva Āgamas (R. G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 124).

[2] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXI, p. 8. The pilaster with the figure of Lakulīśa is published in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1930-34, Pl. CXX (c). The present writer has attempted to prove that Lakulīśa (1st half of the 2nd century A.D.) was really the systematiser, not the real founder, of the Pāśupata cult; *cf. Proceedings of the Jaipur Session of the Indian History Congress*, pp. 32 ff.

Lakulīśa niche in the Someśvara temple at Mukhaliṅgam. The four-armed ithyphallic god is shown seated in a similar pose on a double-petalled lotus poised on its stick-like stalk, on either side of which are shown four bearded sages as if engaged in dispute (these four may stand for the four immediate disciples of Lakulīśa, Kuśika, Mitra, Garga and Kauruṣya). His two front hands are shown in the *dharmacakra mudrā*, while the back right and left hands hold a rosary and a trident; the club, his special cognisance (he is also known as Lakuṭapāṇīśa, *i.e.*, ' the lord with a club in his hand '), is shown encircled by his left front arm. These two sculptures are representative of the eastern type of Lakulīśa figures, some of which are reminiscent in a way of the Buddha figure in the relief composition depicting the ' Great Miracle of Śrāvastī ' (*cf.* my observations on the Śiśireśvara temple relief of Lakulīśa, *supra*, p. 6). It may be noted here that the cult of Śiva-Lakulīśa was well prevalent in Orissa and Bengal (one of the early mediaeval temples in the Begunia group contain a tiny figure of Lakulīśa), and in Western India where Lakulīśa flourished.

It will now be necessary to take into account a few of the Śaiva reliefs of the *ugra* variety, belonging to the mediaeval period which do not illustrate any particular story. One of the finest Bhairava figures hailing from Khiching and belonging to the early mediaeval period shows the many-armed deity standing in a *dvibhaṅga* pose on a double-petalled lotus attended on either side by a male and a female attendant standing gracefully. The divine face with its staring eyes and open mouth showing fangs is moustached and bearded, and the head is adorned with well-arranged rows of *jaṭās*. Most of the hands are broken, but two of the emblems held by them, a kettle-drum and a trident, are clearly recognisable; the body of the god is tastefully decorated with a few ornaments, and the general treatment of the sculpture appears to show that the artist in a very skilful way wanted to emphasise the innate pacific character of this terrific aspect of the god (Pl. XXXV, Fig. 3). If we compare this graceful creation of the Orissan artist with

the many-armed Bhairava in the Asutosh Museum of the late mediaeval period, reproduced in the same plate (Fig. 4), hailing from North Bengal, we cannot but realise the great ideological difference in representing the same concept by two different artists of Eastern India. The face of the dire god is unfortunately damaged, but the many weapons of destruction held by some of his far-flung arms, the *śūla* held by his front right hand piercing the breast of the supine figure on which he stands in the *ālīḍha* pose, the miniature figures of the two uncouth attendants, one a plump and pot-bellied male and the other a lean and emaciated female, in swiftly moving *atibhaṅga* pose on either side, the long garland made up of skull and bone, etc.,—all these features help to create an atmosphere of unmitigated terror. With these two sculptures may be studied the four-armed figure of Baṭuka Bhairava accompanied by a dog reproduced in figure 1 of the same plate. The youthful god wearing a skull-garland and a skull-girdle advances to left with his dog licking at the severed head held by his front right hand, his three other hands holding a sword, a bell and a trident. Though the artist's attempt to emphasise the terrific aspect of the god seems to be a bit half-hearted here, yet this very late sculpture hailing from Banaras has got a character of its own.

Many are the image types of Śiva bearing such names as Aghora, Raudra-Pāśupata, Vīrabhadra, Virūpākṣa, etc., which belong to this group, as their names indicate their terrific nature; not all of them, however, are fearful in outward appearance. Those Vīrabhadra reliefs which are shown as guardians of the Divine Mothers (Sapta Mātṛkās) are usually placid in character. One such very well-carved image, reproduced here (Pl. XXV, Fig. 2), hails from Puri (it is one of the image groups, the Mātṛkās and their guardians, Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa, placed on the bank of the Mārkaṇḍeya tank there). The ithyphallic four-armed god is seated in *lalitākṣepa* pose with his mount beneath the seat; his left hands are broken, the front right hand appears to handle the stump of a *vīṇā*, the greater part of which is broken, but the other end of which seems to be present near his left shoulder. If it were a *vīṇā*, then the fearful guardian of the Mothers is shown here in the aspect of the Vīṇādhara-Dakṣiṇāmurti of Śiva (this relief is also noted earlier in connection with the Vīṇādhara-Dakṣiṇāmūrti of the god). Kaṅkālamūrti reliefs of Śiva mostly hail from south India and they have been elaborately described by Gopinath Rao in his book.[1] Notice here need be taken only of one of the placid image types which is secondarily associated with this dire aspect of the god. It may be noted here that a story seems to underlie it, but the mythological association is not very pronounced. This is the Bhikṣāṭanamūrti, assuming which form the god begged for food and received it from his consort on one occasion. One such relief, reproduced here (Pl. XXXII, Fig. 2), belongs to the Bṛhadīśvara temple, Tanjore, and is one of the best examples of Chola art. The four-armed youthful god stands nude in graceful *ābhaṅga* pose in the central niche, holding a skull-cup (the begging bowl) in his front left hand, with a staff held by the back left shown stretched across his shoulders; the objects held by the two right hands are not distinct; the deer (*mṛga*) frisks upward in his right, and a dwarf (a Gaṇa) is shown half-length carrying a bowl over his head. In the side niche on the right Pārvatī is shown advancing to offer food to her lord, while an assemblage of dwarfish Gaṇas appears on the other side. The big *jaṭābhāra* on the head, and the bell tied to his right leg should be specially noted here, the latter trait emphasising in a way the belief that the god was outside the pale of orthodox Vedism.[2] This fine sculpture seems to be a combination of Kaṅkāla- and Bhikṣāṭana-mūrtis of Śiva, for the staff (*kaṅkāladaṇḍa*) laid across the shoulders is a

1 For a detailed account of Kaṅkālamūrti, *cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-305, Pls. LXXXII-LXXXV. For the various types of Bhairavamūrti and Vīrabhadra-mūrti which cannot be discussed here for want of space, *cf.* Rao, *Ibid.*, pp. 177-78 and plates. Other *ghora* types of Śaiva icons, illustrating some story have been discussed by Rao in the same section (pp. 188-202).

2 It was still recently the custom in some parts of Southern India to enforce the untouchables (the Pariyās or the Pañcamas) to sound a bell (sometimes the bells were tied to their legs) in order to announce their approach near *agrahāras* inhabited by the Hindus of the four upper castes.

characteristic feature of the former. Rao says that this staff, which had the bones of Brahmā and Viśvaksena killed by Śiva tied round its top and for which sin of Brahmahatyā (Brahmanicide, Viśvaksena the gate-keeper of Viṣṇu was also a Brahman) he had to undertake expiatory wandering begging his food, is not to be shown in his Bhikṣāṭana aspect (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 306). He has rightly noted that these images of Śiva are only to be found in the south of India. But the clay images of Annapūrṇā worshipped in Bengal in the month of Caitra (March-April) show in their composition the goddess ladling out food to the nude god begging it from his consort.

It will not be possible for exigencies of space to study fully the many *saumya* and *ugra* types of Śaiva images illustrating particular myths. A few representative reliefs of this character belonging to these groups will now be briefly noted here. Two of the commonest Anugrahamūrtis of Śiva, mostly hailing from south India are the Rāvaṇānugramūrti and Caṇḍeśānugrahamūrti. The former is more common in the south of India, though north Indian copies of it are not absolutely unknown; the latter, however, is typically south Indian mostly hailing from the Chola region. Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1, shows the oft-reproduced Kailāsa (Ellora) panel which depicts the demon king of Laṅkā making his supreme effort to raise the Kailāsa mountain with Śiva, Umā and their attendants on it. Inspite of the great damage which the relief has suffered, it displays in a remarkable manner the great artistic skill of the sculptor in giving so noble and magnificent a shape to the grotesque mythological theme. Rene Grousset observes, ' Contrasted with the subterranean violence of the Titan is the serenity of the god, who, with the touch of his toe, steadies the mountain and crushes the disturber '. Comparing this Ellora sculpture with Michael Angelo's ' last Judgment ' at the Vatican, he remarks, ' In both scenes, so different in so many ways, there are unforgettable visions of the cosmic power of the Eternal one ' (*The Sum of History*, p. 128). In this Indian

relief, however, Śiva is not presented as ' a god of justice and of vengeance, crushing the disturber ', but as a bestower of his grace on the demon king by curbing his inordinate pride and presumption, and by putting him in his proper place. The Gangaikondacolapuram sculpture reproduced here (Pl. XXXV, Fig. 5) beautifully illustrates the story of the Śaiva devotee Vicāraśarman who disturbed in his worship of the great god by no less a person than his father, Yajñadatta, hit him severely without knowing his identity. Śiva was immensely pleased by Vicāraśarman's unstinted and one-souled devotion, gave his devotee the name of Caṇḍeśa and made him the chief of the host of his Gaṇas. The four-armed god accompanied by his consort is shown here putting a garland round the head of Caṇḍeśa who is offering homage to his master. The loving care of the masterful god and the attitude of self-surrender of his *ekāntika bhakta* are feelingly depicted with supreme skill by the unnamed Chola artist of the 1st quarter of the eleventh century A.D.

Mediaeval sculptures illustrating the theme of Śiva's marriage with Umā, usually described as Kalyāṇasundara- or Vaivāhika-mūrti, are found in several parts of India, one of the most outstanding examples of which being the Elephanta relief, a sublime product of Indian artistic genius. The one being reproduced here (Pl. XXXVIII, Fig. 1) is another well-known relief of a little earlier date (c. 8th century A.D.) hailing from Ellora. Śiva holding the hand of Pārvatī (*pāṇigrahaṇa*, an act obligatory in the Hindu marriage ceremony) occupies the centre of the composition with Brahmā (the officiating priest) seated before the fire to his left, Indra (?) standing behind Brahmā, Viṣṇu (the giver of the bride) and Lakṣmī standing behind Pārvatī on the proper right corner; in the two parallel rows above are shown hovering in the sky on their respective mounts the Dikpālas (Varuṇa on makara, Indra on an elephant, Agni on a ram, Yama on a buffalo, Vāyu on a stag, Īśāna on a bull and Nirṛti on a man can be recognised), the Vidyādhara couples, the Sādhyas, etc. The artist has chiselled out this crowded

composition with great feeling and grace, thus creating a noble example of the early mediaeval art of Deccan. The other relief, shown here (Pl. XV, Fig. 2), represents the theme of Gaṅgādharamūrti of Śiva in an interesting manner. The sculpture hails from the Gangaikondacolapuram temple; Śiva releases Gaṅgā pent up in his matted locks by stretching a coil of his *jaṭās* with his back right hand, while caressing with his front right hand his principal consort Umā (the river goddess Gaṅgā became his other wife), as if to pacify her jealousy for her co-wife (the expression and attitude of Umā seem to emphasise this).

Śiva as the great destroyer has been depicted in many Indian art creations which illustrate the stories connected with his specific acts of destruction. Śiva is said to have destroyed not only various demons like Gajāsura (the ' elephant demon '), Tripurāsura (the ' demon of the three fortresses '), Andhakāsura, Jālandhara and others, but punished also such gods, as Yama (the ' god of death ') for his audacity in attempting to take away the life of the young sage Mārkaṇḍeya, a great Śiva-bhakta, Kāma (the ' god of love ') for his attempts to arouse in his mind feelings of love for Umā (Pārvatī, the daughter of Himavat, whom he afterwards married), Narasiṃha for his destruction of Hiraṇyakaśipu, the Śiva-bhakta Daitya king, etc. These Saṃhāramūrtis of the god are described in iconographic and other texts as Gajāsurasaṃhāramūrti, Tripurāntakamūrti, Andhakāsuravadhamūrti, Jālandharavadhamūrti, Kālārimūrti; Kāmadahana- or Kāmāntaka-mūrti, Śarabheśamūrti, etc. Some of the finest mediaeval reliefs represent these motifs, and the much mutilated Ellora and Elephanta panels, depicting the Tripurāntaka- and Andhakāsuravadha-mūrtis of Śiva, reach sublime heights of sculptural art. It will be possible here to illustrate only a few among them. The many-armed Gajāsurasaṃhāramūrti, illustrated here (Pl. XXXIII, Fig. 2), is one of a group of striking reliefs found in different parts of India, mostly from the south, and hails from Darasuram. It depicts the irate god engaged in a vigorous dance of fierce ecstasy on the elephant demon's head after killing him who

had given so much trouble to the Ṛṣis; part of the hide of the Asura is spread aloft by the god using it as a sort of cover; the Devī stands at the lower right corner as the only awe-struck spectator of the divine act of retribution. It may be incidentally suggested here that the mythology underlying Gajāsurasaṃhāramūrti might have developed out of the epithet *kṛttivāsa*, *i.e.*, '(a god) who has the hide of an animal (elephant here, Śiva also may use tiger-skin as his apparel) for his garment,'—one of the hundred such epithets given to Rudra in the *Śatarudrīya*. The Chola bronze in the Bṛhadīśvara temple, Tanjore, reproduced here (Pl. XXXII, Fig. 3) is a striking example of the Tripurāntaka aspect of Śiva, in which its association with the particular mythology is barely suggested by the artist with the help of the particular standing pose of the four-armed god. The pose is *pratyālīḍha*, one adopted by the archers, and the front two hands are in the attitude of shooting an arrow from the bow, though the weapons are not shown. The mythology tells us that Śiva killed Tripura by these weapons, and the mediaeval artists were faithful to this tradition. The back hands carry his usual emblems, *paraśu* and *mṛga* (a tiny one), and the god's left leg rests on a tiny malformed figure (probably the Apasmārapuruṣa). The faint smile shown lingering on the beautifully shaped face and the well-modelled grace of the whole figure characterise the effortless ease with which the divine act of chastisement was being done by the god. The mythology in this case also seems to have had a Vedic basis. The Kālārimūrti of Śiva reproduced here (Pl. XXXIII, Fig. 3) belongs to the same temple, Tanjore. It depicts in a characteristic manner the theme in three niches, the central one being much bigger than the two side ones. Here also the sculptor has used the method of bare suggestion, the actual punishment of the god of death being not shown (this is emphasised in some Ellora and other reliefs depicting the same theme). The niche in the left contains the figure of Yama (the same as Kāla) rushing forward to take the life of Mārkaṇḍeya, while that in the right shows the young sage clinging in

great fear to the emblem of his god, which he was worshipping at the time. The central niche depicts Śiva engaged in ecstatic dance evidently after he has saved his Bhakta by severely punishing Kāla for his audacity. The Gangaikondacolapuram temple relief illustrating the Kāmadahana aspect of the god (Pl. XXXIII, Fig. 1) also shows the same trait of the artist's use of ' simple suggestiveness '. Here also the theme is worked out in three unequal niches. The left one contains the figures of Kāmadeva who assures his wife Rati clinging to him in fear and wonder (her left hand is in the *vismayahasta* pose) with his head inverted; the right one contains the figures of Pārvatī and her attendant diffidently approaching Śiva with their hands in the *añjalimudrā*. The god is shown in the central niche seated in the *lalitākṣepa pose* (that he is not depicted in *Yogāsana* suggests that he has been already disturbed in the act of his *dhyānayoga*) and is about to burn the god of love with a glance ; but the serene contemplative look on the face of the god seems to show that the sculptor has intended here to present the god just before he had burnt Kāma to ashes by his angry look. It should be noted that in all the three sculptures just described, the individual Chola artists responsible for them have emphasised in a very skilful manner the central idea of pacifism underlying these destructive aspects of the great god. This cannot be said about the Darasuram temple relief which depicts the Śarabheśamūrti of Śiva (Pl. XXXIV, Fig. 2). The curious chimaera-like figures of Śiva as Śarabheśa and Viṣṇu as Narasiṃha are no doubt carved with great vigour, but the weird and grotesque theme lacks any grace and refinement. The reason is obvious, for the whole motif owes its origin to the feeling of unmitigated sectarian rivalry and bitterness. The sculptor faithfully carries out the behest of the rankly sectarian Śaiva mythmaker, and thus has no scope for producing a noble specimen of art. The grotesqueness of the whole relief is only very partially relieved by the elegant carving of the tiny figures of the human admirers on the top and the pose of hapless abandon in which Narasiṃha is shown.

The worship of the female principle can be traced in India, as in many other ancient countries of the world, to a very remote past. Many scholars have suggested that the cult of the Mother goddess existed in some form or other among the early Indus Valley people. Pottery images of the goddess have been found in course of the excavations in the sites, and Mackay is of opinion that they ' were kept almost in every house in the ancient Indus cities, probably in a recess or on a bracket on the wall'.[1] The early Indus Valley settlers appear also to have worshipped her in her aniconic form. Many ' ringstones ' discovered in the sites can justifiably be described as cult objects symbolising the Mother aspect of the goddess, if they are studied along with the phallic objects found there, which symbolised the father aspect of the god also worshipped in the Indus Valley. Mention has already been made in a previous chapter of this book (*supra*, pp. 170-73) of the ornamental stone rings and discs of the Maurya and Śuṅga periods, the association of which with the cult of the Mother goddess can be sufficiently demonstrated. These very ancient finds can profitably be compared with the *cakras* and *yantras* of more modern times, which were utilised by the Śāktas in the ritualistic worship of the Great Mother. The nude female figures very often shown in these ornamental ' ringstones ' and ' discs ' are almost invariably associated with plants and vegetation (sometimes with men and animals), and their parallels can be found among both the Indus Valley remains and the remains of the Gupta period. On one oblong terracotta sealing found at Harappa appears a nude female figure upside down with legs wide apart and with a plant issuing from her womb ; an early Gupta terracotta sealing shows a goddess with her legs in much the same position, but with a lotus issuing from her neck instead of from her womb (*cf. supra*, p. 167). This idea about the association of the

1 *Early Indus Civilisations*, 2nd edition, p. 54.

vegetation with the goddess is very well worked out in her Śākambharī aspect (*Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, Devīmāhātmya, 91, 48-9). This association is still emphasised in the Navapatrikā ceremony of the autumnal Durgā worship in Bengal, which shows that the Devī was in a way the personification of the vegetation spirit.[1] She is the mother *par excellence* sustaining her children, the men and animals of the universe, with food produced from her body. The nuclei of some other concepts about the goddess can be traced to the prehistoric times (*cf. supra*, pp. 166-69), and the early stages of the cult of the Śakti seem to go back to this remote past.

Early Vedic ritualism presents to us a different picture. More prominence is given here to male deities, and the goddesses occupy a comparatively subordinate position. But the several female deities found there bring out in a striking manner the inner workings of the Vedic seers' minds. The ancient Vedic Ṛṣis assigned importance to such goddesses as Aditi, the Divine Mother, Uṣas, the goddess of dawn, Pṛthivī, the mother earth, and lastly Vāc, the goddess of speech. Sarasvatī, primarily a river goddess (it was on the banks of this river that the distinctive traits of Vedic culture were formulated), Rātri, the goddess personifying a star-lit night, Purandhi, Iḷā and Dhīṣaṇā, collectively personifying such abstract attributes as abundance and nourishment, were also sung in some hymns of the *Ṛgveda*. But in the sublime conception of Vāc outlined in the Devī-sūkta (*R. V.*, X. 125), is to be found one of the greatest and at the same time simplest expositions of the concept of divine Energy or Śakti inherent in everything,—in gods, men and animals, nay in the universe itself. This hymn as well as the hymn associated with Rātri (*R.V.*, X. 127) came to occupy a very

[1] The Navapatrikā or 'nine plants' are *rambhā* (plantain tree), *kacvī* (Arum colocasia), *haridrā* (turmeric plant), *jayantī* (barley), *bel* (wood-apple), *dāḍima* (pomegranate), *aśoka* (Jonesia Aśoka), *māna* and *dhānya* (paddy). The particular forms of the goddess presiding over the individual plants are Brahmāṇī, Kālikā, Durgā, Kārttikī, Śivā, Raktadantikā, Śokarahitā, Cāmuṇḍā and Lakṣmī respectively; *Puraścaryārṇava*, Pt. III (Benares edition, 1904), pp. 1034-35. These nine forms of the Devī again can be described as comprising a variety of the Navadurgās.

prominent position in the Śākta ritual of subsequent times. Thus, the developed Śakti worship of the epic and Purāṇic times was not a little indebted to these goddess concepts, the very idea underlying the word *śakti* being based on the central theme of the Devī-sūkta. But it is also true that such names as Ambikā, Umā, Durgā, Kālī, etc., which came to designate, singly or collectively, the central figure of the Śākta cult, do not occur in the *Ṛgveda*. These names, however are found in the later Vedic texts. Ambikā appears first as Rudra's sister in the *Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā* (III. 57) and the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (I. 6. 10, 4-5), and then as his consort in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (X. 18). The goddess is invoked in the last-mentioned work as Durgā Vairocanī, Kātyāyanī and Kanyākumārī (X. 1, 7). The *Kena Upaniṣad* (III. 25) refers to Umā Haimavatī as the personified Brahmavidyā ('the knowledge about the Brahman'). Kālī and Karālī are mentioned in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (I. 2, 4) as two of the seven tongues of Agni, the others being Manojavā, Sulohitā, Sudhūmravarṇā, Sphuliṅginī and Viśvarucī. The number seven is to be noted; the number of the Divine Mothers is usually the same—the Sapta-Mātṛkā. Such names of the Devī as Bhadrakālī, Bhavānī, Durgā, etc., are found in the late Vedic works like the *Sāṅkhyāyana* and *Hiraṇyakeśin Gṛhyasūtras*, and in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*. These data prove clearly that some features of the cult, existing in a nascent stage in earlier times, were gradually taking shape and form of a type well familiar in the subsequent period.

The two Durgāstotras in the *Mahābhārata* (IV. 6 and VI. 23) and the Āryāstava in its supplement (*Harivaṃśa*, III. 3) outline the various constituent elements underlying the principal cult picture of the developed Śākta cult. The concept of the composite goddess contained in its various elements such as her 'mother', 'daughter', and 'sister' aspects, her Vedic Aryan element (*cf.* her appellations Āryā, Kauśikī, Kātyāyanī, *i.e.*, 'the Aryan goddess', 'the goddess of the Kuśika and Kātya sage clans'), and last, but not the least, the various non-Aryan strands in her character.

The Āryāstava says that ' she was well worshipped by the Śavaras, Barbaras, and the Pulindas ' (*Śavarair-Barbaraiścaiva Pulindaiśca supūjitā*). She is also described in other contexts as Aparṇā (' not even covered with a leaf garment ', *i.e.*, ' nude '), Nagna-Śavarī (' the naked Śavara woman ') and Parṇa-Śavarī (' the leaf-clad Śavara woman '—this is the designation of a Vajrayāna goddess). The Durgāstotras also characterise the goddess as the great saviour who, being prayed to, delivers men from such terrors as captivity, wilderness, drowning, harassment by robbers, great forests, etc. It may be mentioned incidentally that the Mahāyāna Buddhist goddess Tārā is conceived as saving her votaries from ' eight great terrors ' (*aṣṭamahābhaya*), among which those mentioned above are included (mediaeval images of Tārā from Southern and Eastern India are known in which these *mahābhayas* are illustrated in the *prabhāvalī*). The *Mahābhārata*, thus, gives us a very interesting idea about the composite character of the cult and the cult icon. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is, however, less indicative of the prevalence of Śakti worship in India, but the comparative paucity of any clear mention of the worship of the Devī here does not indicate anything about the existence of the cult during its period of composition.[1]

Some of the early authoritative Purāṇas, however, fully compensate the paucity of reference to the Śākta cult in the lesser epic. The Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* contains the most representative and important of the Purāṇic characterisations of the cult picture. The various Devīstutis there (Brahmā-stuti, Śakrādi-stuti, Nārāyaṇī-stuti, etc.), reveal in a striking manner some of the multifarious strands that contributed to the formation of the concept about the composite cult goddess. The last couplet of the Nārāyaṇī-stuti (Ch. 91), which says that the goddess

[1] The original *Rāmāyaṇa* does not mention the worship of the Devī by Rāma when he was in some difficulty about killing Rāvaṇa. In the 106th sarga of the Yuddhakāṇḍa (canto VI) there, the sage Agastya advises Rāma to recite the Ādityahṛdaya, a *stava* to propitiate the Sun God, and after reciting it thrice, the hero could kill the demon. It is only in the Bengali *Rāmāyaṇa* by Kṛttivāsa, that the worship of the Sun is replaced by the worship of Durgā.

will as often incarnate herself and kill the enemies of the gods as the Dānavas will cause obstacles and distress to them,[1] distinctly reminds us of the ideology behind the divine incarnation (Avatāravāda) explained in the first few verses of the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The stutis again express in a characteristic manner the ideas about the divine power and energy centering round the Devī, that are so beautifully emphasised in the two great hymns of the *Ṛgveda*, the Devīsūkta and the Rātrisūkta. These verses of the Purāṇas again lay stress upon the various constituent elements that collectively make up the form of the great composite goddess, the central deity of the Śakti cult. The first part of the 82nd chapter of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* also shows in a characteristic manner how the great goddess came out from the accumulated fury not only of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā, but also of many other gods of the Brahmanic pantheon, when the gods were defeated in the beginning by Mahiṣāsura and his retinue (1-18; the last couplet reads: *Tataḥ samastadevānāṃ tejorāśisamudbhavām* | *Tāṃ vilokya mudaṃ prāpuramarā Mahiṣārditāḥ*).

The Mother aspect of the Devī is very clearly emphasised in the Jaganmātā or Jagadambā concept so well developed in the Purāṇic Durgāstutis, and the Vedāntins' concept of Māyā also forms a characteristic trait of the goddess as the Mahāmāyā, or ' Great Māyā ' The Sāṃkhya theory of Puruṣa and Prakrti is also idealised in the system of the Śāktas in which Śiva representing the former (Puruṣa) always remains passive, while the great Devī, endowed with dynamic activities, symbolises Prakṛti. All these and many other abstract ideologies gradually came to be symbolised by the Devī, the supreme deity of the Śāktas, who resides in the macrocosm as well as in the microcosm. The Śāktas believe in the Kuṇḍalinī Śakti, inherent but dormant in man, which has to be awakened through various yogic and other processes and raised by stages from Mūlādhāra, the lowest lying *cakra* in the human body to the highest of the *cakras*

[1] *Itthaṃ yadā yadā bādhā dānavotthā bhaviṣyati* | *Tadā tadāvatīryāhaṃ kariṣyāmyarisaṃkṣayam*||

there, the Sahasrāra or the Ājñācakra;[1] this process of rousing the Kuṇḍalinī Śakti and carrying it to the highest cognitive centre of the human body is known to the Śāktas as *Ṣaṭcakrabheda*, and presupposes the difficult and sustained efforts of a Tāntric Sādhaka who, if successful in his efforts, is blessed with the beatific vision of the Devī, and attains salvation. It must be said, however, that this and other esoteric tenets of the Śāktas took time to attain full development, and none of the extant Tāntric texts that expounds these doctrines appear to go beyond the early mediaeval period.

Faint traces of Tāntricism, however, can be found in the texts and inscriptions of the Gupta period, if not earlier. The very word *tantra* occurs in an inscription of the first quarter of the fifth century A.D. found in the village of Gangdhar (Jhalwar, Madhya Bhārat). In lines 22-3 of it, mention is made of the erection of ' the very terrible abode of the (Divine Mothers), filled full of Ḍākinīs, ... who stir up the very oceans with the mighty wind rising from the Tāntric rites of their religion.'[2] Reference has already been made in Chapter VI of this book to the significance of the word *maṇḍalakrama* occurring in the 58th chapter of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, and the persons, well versed in the *maṇḍalakrama*, entitled to instal the images of the Divine Mothers, might have been Tāntric Śakti-worshippers (*supra*, p. 230). It has also been incidentally mentioned earlier in this book (*supra*, pp. 83-4) that the concept about the Śaktipīṭhas was well known in the 7th century A.D., for it did not fail to attract the notice of the keenly observant Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang. The famous story of Dakṣa's sacrifice as narrated in the Great Epic may not be very old, but the *pīṭha* idea which grew out of it was clearly based on the

[1] The *cakras* are usually known as Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipura, Anāhata, Viśuddha, Ājñācakra or Sahasrāra located respectively in the anal region, the region just above the sex organ, the navel, the heart, the throat and the brain or the forehead of the human body.

[2] *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, p. 78. The royal minister Mayūrakṣaka appears to have had some knowledge about the ritualism connected with the worship of the Divine Mothers, as reference to the Ḍākinīs and the terrific Tāntric rites in the inscription proves.

Tāntric concept of the intimate association of Śakti with Bhairava, the terrific aspect of Śiva.[1] The Tīrthayātrā section of the *Mahābhārata* (Vanaparva) refers to three Śakti Pīṭhas associated with the Yoni and Stana of the goddess. Kuṇḍas or sacred tanks are also their invariable adjuncts, and two Yonikuṇḍas (one situated at Bhīmāsthāna beyond Pañcanada, and the other on a hill called Udyatparvata), and one Stanakuṇḍa on a peak known as Gaurīśikhara (possibly in the Gauhati region) are mentioned there.[2] The *Mahāmāyūrī*, a Sanskrit Buddhist text composed in the early centuries of the Christian era, possibly also refers to the shrine of Bhīmā under the name of Bhīṣaṇā and to that of her consort as Śivabhadra in the extreme north-west of India (*Journal Asiatique*, Vol. XV, 1915, p. 370).

In the mediaeval period Tāntricism associated with Brahmanical Hinduism as well as Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna forms of Buddhism attained full development in India, the cult being specially predominant in Eastern India. Śakti worship was also popular among many Hindus of the extreme south-west of India, and tradition says that Śaṃkarācārya, the greatest exponent of Advaitavāda, was at heart a worshipper of the goddess. He is said to have composed in her honour the famous Tāntric text *Saundaryalaharī*, and an authoritative commentary on the ' One Thousand Names of Lalitā ' (*Lalitāsahasranāma*). It will not be possible here to give even a very brief account of the tenets of the developed Śakti cult which were expounded in the various extant Tāntric texts of the late mediaeval period. But a

[1] The mythology about Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa-Prajāpati and the first wife of Rudra-Śiva, is closely connected with the ideology behind the *pīṭha* concept. Satī went uninvited to attend the sacrifice being performed by her father, and died there on hearing him abuse her husband. At this Śiva destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice, severely punished him and his invited guests, and began to roam aimlessly with the corpse of his wife on his shoulders out of sheer grief for his beloved. Viṣṇu just to cure Śiva of this obsession of grief cut up Satī's body with his *cakra* and had the limbs scattered over different lands. The places where these severed limbs of Satī fell became Śaktipīṭhas, and such was the great love of Śiva for his dear wife that he, assuming the forms of so many Bhairavas, settled in their vicinity to keep a watch over the parts of his consort's body. The chief objects of worship in these *pīṭhas* were mainly aniconic.

[2] D. C. Sircar, ' Śaktipīṭhas ', *J.R.A.S.B.*, Letters, Vol. XIV, pp. 8-9.

brief reference may be made here to the real nature of the Devī as explained in the Devīmāhātmya and its six limbs (*ṣaḍaṅgas*), the Devīkavaca, the Devīkīlaka, the Argalāstotra, and especially the three Rahasyas—Prādhānika-, Vaikṛtika- and Mūrti-rahasyas. It is needless to say that all these six limbs were composed in course of time, sometime after the original Caṇḍī portion of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* had been written. It is interesting to note, however, that these texts collectively give us an idea about some of the image-types of the goddess in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. True it is, that to a pious devotee of the Śākta cult, the Śakti is really the formless absolute principle immanent in the whole universe as the supreme and all-pervading consciousness (*cf. Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, Ch. 85, 34—*Citirūpeṇa yā kṛtsnametad-vyāpya sthitā jagat*), but the great goddess also assumes various forms of pacific and terrific character (*Saumyāni yāni rūpāṇi . . . . yāni cātyantaghorāṇi*). In the Prādhānika-rahasya of the Caṇḍī we are told that the great and primary goddess Mahālakṣmī, in whom all the three guṇas (*sattva, raja*, and *tama*) are manifest, has a four-armed concrete form, in whose hands are placed a citrus, a mace, a shield and a skull-cup, and who has a snake, *liṅga* and *yoni* on her head. Mahālakṣmī assumed in the time of dissolution the form of Mahākālī, in whom the *tamoguṇa* predominated; it is her four-armed secondary form in blue colour, ornamented with a skull-garland, and with a sword, a skull-cup, a severed head and a shield in her four hands. This secondary goddess came also to be known by such names as Mahāmāyā, Mahāmārī, Kṣudhā (the ' great hunger '), Tṛṣā (' thirst '), Nidrā or Yoganidrā, Kālarātri and others. Out of the great Mahālakṣmī again emanated the white-coloured tertiary goddess Mahāsarasvatī in whom *sattvaguṇa* prevailed, and who held in her four hands a rosary of beads, an elephant goad, a lyre and a manuscript. This emanation came also to be known by such names as Mahāvidyā, Mahāvāṇī, Bhāratī, Vāk, Āryā, Brāhmī, Vedagarbhā, etc. From these three forms of Śakti, one primary and the others emanatory, were evolved in turn Brahmā and Śrī, Rudra and Trayī or

Vedavidyā, and Viṣṇu and Gaurī. In the Vaikṛtika- and Mūrti-rahasyas the other names and concrete forms or image-types of the great goddess are elaborately described, and these descriptions attempt in a way to outline the deep symbolism underlying her various aspects. It is also interesting to note that in the unfolding of the nature of the Devī in these supplements to the Devīmāhātmya, the other two major Brahmanical cult-gods, Viṣṇu and Śiva and the Vedic Brahmā find a well-recognised, though a subordinate, place. Some of the chapters of the original Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, on the other hand, contain descriptions of the various early forms of the goddess, such as the Mahiṣāsuramardinī, the Mātṛkās, Cāmuṇḍā, and others.

Gopinath Rao has collected numerous names of the various forms of the goddess and their iconographic descriptions from different Āgamas; but he could illustrate only a few of these forms by extant stone and bronze sculptures of the early and late mediaeval periods. It will be possible here neither to note the textual descriptions of the numerous images of the Devī, nor to study at some length the iconographic features of even an appreciable number of her extant image-types for exigences of space.[1] Emphasis will be mainly laid here on her Mahiṣāsuramardinī and Mātṛkā aspects and a few other allied forms. Mythologically speaking, the Mahiṣāsuramardinī form of the goddess is one of her earliest and most important forms so beautifully delineated in the Devīmāhātmya. Various texts describe different iconic types of the goddess, but the difference mainly lies in the number of arms that are attributed to the Devī. A large number of eight- or ten-armed images of the Mahiṣāsuramardinī have been discovered in Eastern India, and the ten-armed variety of such iconic types endowed with some additional features came to be the accepted model of the composite clay image in the autumnal Durgā worship in Bengal. A study of a few of the early reliefs will enable

[1] Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 338-400 and Plates; *cf.* also N. K. Bhattasali, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-227 and Plates, and *Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 449-55, and plates.

us to throw some light on the developmental aspect of the iconic motif. Some very interesting miniature stone reliefs of the Gupta period depicting the two-armed figures of the Devī engaged in combat with the Buffalo Demon were unearthed by Marshall at Bhita, in which no other accessory figures are shown (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, p. 86. Pl. XXXI, Figs. 13 and 14). The beautiful brass image of the four-armed goddess of the time of Meruvarman, king of Chamba (c. 8th century A.D.), has an inscription which describes her as Lakṣaṇā; here the Devī is shown uplifting the hind part of the Demon in the shape of a buffalo by holding its tail with her front left hand, and piercing its neck with a *triśūla* by her front right, while she tramples on its neck with her right leg (her back hands hold a sword and a bell). This standing attitude of the goddess exactly corresponds to the Devīmāhātmya description of the Devī (III. 37—*Evamuktvā samutpatya sārūḍhā taṃ mahāsuram | Padenākrāmya kaṇṭhe ca śūlenainamatāḍayat*).[1] The goddess is shown killing the Buffalo Demon almost in the same attitude in a far earlier relief carved on the façade of the Candragupta (II) cave at Udayagiri (Bhilsa, Madhya Bharat). It is curious, however, that in a relief of so early a period the Devī is endowed with as many as twelve arms, the hands holding many weapons and attributes, two back right and left hands stretching probably an iguana (*godhā*; already noticed, *cf. supra*, p. 172). The relief is very much damaged, but it still shows much animation, and when it was in a good state of preservation it must have belonged to some of the best specimens of Gupta art (Pl. XLI, Fig. 4). It seems that the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* tradition about this mode of attack by the Devī was well known to the artists of Northern and Central India of the Gupta and early mediaeval periods. It is also to be noted that none of these sculptures show the lion mount of the goddess. In the Gangaikondacolapuram sculpture depicting the same theme, the lion is present on the left, but the similar standing attitude of the goddess is

[1] J. Ph. Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba State*, p. 138, Pl. VII (*b*).

shown in a lifeless manner (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. CIII). Some early mediaeval sculptors of India began to change the mode of depicting the Devī's fight with the Demon, and the Mahabalipuram and Ellora panels reproduced by Rao (*op. cit.*, Pls. CIV and CV) are two of the remarkable specimens illustrative of the changed mode. The much-mutilated Ellora relief reproduced here (Pl. XLI, Fig. 2) shows the eight-armed Devī riding on her lion mount vigorously attacking Mahiṣāsura, a full-scale man of her stature with buffalo horns; other demons, some fallen and others still fighting, are shown below, and in the two uppermost rows in the panel are the divine onlookers of the fight. The intensity of the actual combat is very skilfully demonstrated by the artist who has also not failed to endow the relief with some *genre* interest by the introduction of the expectant divine onlookers in the upper section of the panel. If we compare this very lively panel from Ellora with two sculptures, one from Aihole and the other from Haripur (Mayurbhanj, Orissa), we are confronted with the fact how the earlier traditional mode of the combat between the Devī and the Aṣura was given a modified form by the sculptor of the western Calukya country on the one hand and the Orissan artist from Mayurbhanj on the other. The Aihole relief (earlier in point of date, c. 6th or 7th century A.D.) shows the eight-armed goddess piercing the upturned neck of the Buffalo Demon (no man comes out of the decapitated trunk of the animal, which is a later feature), her lion mount on the left being a silent onlooker (Pl. XLII, Fig. 3). The Haripur sculpture (a few centuries later than the Aihole one) shows the eight-armed goddess in a more aggressive pose, where the three prongs of the *śūla* pierce the upturned neck of the human Demon issuing out of the decapitated trunk of the animal, the lion also taking part in the fight (Pl. XLII, Fig. 2). The early Calukyan artist appears to lay stress on the easy and effortless grace with which the divine act of retribution was carried out, while the Orissan sculpture portrays with success the dynamic vigour underlying the act. The great popularity of this theme of the

goddess slaying the Buffalo Demon in distant corners of India can be demonstrated with the help of two interesting objects, one of which is being illustrated here. Plate XLII, Figure 1, shows the figure of Mahiṣāsuramardinī cast from a mould, found at Peshawar; the details are not distinct, but the turreted crown of the goddess, the face and upper part of her body, and the legs and the body of the animal are clear. The second image, unique of its kind, recovered from a North Bengal village in the district of Dinajpur, depicts in a very interesting manner the Nava- (nine) Durgā motif. The central figure of Mahiṣāsuramardinī is eighteen-armed, while eight other sixteen-armed miniature replicas of the same type are grouped round it.[1] How the same theme was given further re-orientation by the Śakti-worshippers in Bengal is illustrated by another unique sculpture found in the same district. The thirty-two arms of the goddess riding on a lion and engaged in combat with demons (not the Buffalo Demon in particular) are meant to emphasise, in however imperfect a manner, the all-powerful and all-embracing character of the Divine Śakti; on the top section of its *prabhāvalī* are shown the miniature figures of Gaṇapati, Sūrya, Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā.[2]

Mention has been made in Chapter IV of this book of the early iconic type of the Devī either accompanied by her lion mount or actually riding on it (*supra*, pp. 134-35).

[1] *Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 453-4, and Pl. XIII. 35. There are different lists of the names of the Navadurgās. Monier Williams mentions Kumārikā, Trimūrti (?), Kalyāṇī, Rohiṇī, Kālī, Caṇḍikā, Sāmbhavī, Durgā and Bhadrā on the authority of some unnamed lexicon; Rao submits a list on the authority of the Āgamas, which reads Nīlakaṇṭhī, Kṣemaṅkarī, Harasiddhi, Rudrāṇīśa-Durgā, Vana-Durgā, Agni-Durgā, Jaya-Durgā, Vindhyavāsi-Durgā and Ripumāri-Durgā. A list in the Devīkavaca of the Devīmāhā mya reads Śailaputrī, Brahmacāriṇī, Candraghaṇṭā, Kuṣmāṇḍā, Skandamātā, Kātyāyanī, Kālarātri, Mahāgaurī and Siddhidātrī; while some other Purāṇas give the names thus, Ugracaṇḍā, Pracaṇḍā, Caṇḍogrā, Caṇḍanāyikā, Caṇḍā, Caṇḍavatī, Caṇḍarūpā, Aticaṇḍikā, Rudracaṇḍā.

[2] *Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 454, Pl. 1. 5. The five miniature figures on the top of the *prabhāvalī* (four representing the four Brahmanical Hindu cults of Gāṇapatya, Saura, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, the Śākta cult being indicated by the main image, and Brahmā standing for Vedism) remind us in a characteristic manner the display of the Pañca Dhyānī-Buddhas on the aura of many Vajrayāna images of the mediaeval period.

Some mediaeval reliefs hailing from Bihar and now in the collection of the Indian Museum, show the development of this motif in a characteristic manner. One of them shows the four-armed goddess seated astride on the back of her mount; her back hands carry a sword and a shield, front left a *śūla*, the front right being in the *varada* pose. There are the usual flying Vidyādhara figures on the top section of the sparingly decorated elliptical *prabhāvalī;* though the artistic execution is not of a very high order, yet the relief has a character of its own (Pl. XLIII, Fig. 4). The other sculpture emphasises the mother aspect of Durgā Siṃhavāhinī seated in *lalitākṣepa* on the back of her couchant mount; her two right hands and the back left hand are shown in the same manner as in the other Bihar sculpture, while her front left hand clasps her child (probably Kārttikeya) seated on her left lap. Here the art is mainly hieratic, though the image has some grace of its own (Pl. XLII, Fig. 4). The association of the Mother Goddess with alligators (iguana, *godhā*) has been already commented on in Chapter V of this book (*supra*, pp. 171-72). One very unique bronze figure of the Devī found at Nalanda is being illustrated here to show the development of this concept about the goddess in the early mediaeval period. There are some very striking features present in this statuette, which require some detailed notice. The three-eyed and four-armed Devī stands in the *samapādasthānaka* pose, holding in three of her hands a rosary, a hooked staff (*triśikha*?) and a water-vessel (*bhṛṅgāra*); there is a creeping iguana near her right leg, and her lion mount and another horned animal (a buffalo?) are shown on the lower section of the pedestal. Heaped *naivedya* (offering) pots are shown on four corners of the pedestal, and the sun and the moon are placed on either side of the very beautiful and elaborately designed *śiraścakra* (Pl. XLIII, Fig. 2). The iconic motif of Pārvatī associated with iguana has been found in other parts of India, and many sculptures from Eastern India (specially Bengal) illustrate this aspect of the goddess. A type of her four-armed standing figures of the mediaeval

period commonly found in Bengal shows the goddess standing in the *samapādasthānaka* pose having such attributes as a *varāmudrā* or pomegranate, a Śivaliṅga, a *triśikha* in her hands, and an iguana (*godhikā*) carved on the pedestal. Different varieties of this type can be collectively described as Caṇḍī on account of the *godhikā* being given a prominent position in the story of Caṇḍī and Kālaketu current in Bengal. The goddess with iguana can have also the appellation of Śrī, one of the six varieties of Gaurī,—Umā, Pārvatī, Śrī, Rambhā, Totalā and Tripurā,—as described in the *Rūpamaṇḍana* (*Godhāsanāśritā mūrtirgṛhe pūjyā śriye sadā*). She may also be described as Gaurī herself on the basis of another text which enjoins that Gaurī should sit (or stand) on an iguana (*Godhāsanā bhaved-Gaurī*). This motif migrated to Indonesia along with the Mahiṣāsuramardinī motif from Eastern India in early times, and mediaeval replicas of such images have been found there.[1]

The Devī icons described in the preceding pages portray her independent aspect in some of which her association with Śiva is clearly emphasised. But from a very early period, she was also mythologically associated with Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa. The Durgāstotras of the *Mahābhārata* and the Āryāstava of the *Harivaṃśa* describe her as having been born in the womb of Yaśodā in the house of the cowherd Nanda (*Yaśodāgarbhasambhūtām . . .*| *Nandagopakule jātāṃ . . .*). The *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* also gives us the same information (Ch. 91, v. 37), and in its Nārāyaṇī-stuti the gods characterise her as ' the infinitely powerful *Vaiṣṇavīśakti* ' (Ch. 91, v. 4: *Tvaṃ Vaiṣṇavīśaktiranantavīryā viśvasya vījaṃ paramāsi māyā*). The earliest datable iconographic text (Chapter 57 of Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*) also lays stress on this association in its account of Ekānaṃśā, as many as three varieties (two-, four- and eight-armed ones) being described (vv. 37-39). Its two-armed type should show ' the goddess placed between Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa, her left hand resting on her hip, the other hand holding a lotus '. The

1 *J.G.I.S.*, Vol. IV. 1937, pp. 137-47.

Viṣṇudharmottara gives an identical description of Ekānaṃśā in this couplet: *Ekānaṃśāpi kartavyā devī padmakarā tathā* | *Kaṭisthavāmahastā sā madhyasthā Rāma-Kṛṣṇayoḥ* (Bk. III, Ch. 85, 71-2). Several mediaeval eastern Indian stone and bronze reliefs of Ekānaṃśā have been discovered, and the principal object of worship enshrined in the main sanctum of the temple of Ananta-Vāsudeva at Bhuvanesvara (Orissa) is nothing but this goddess with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma on her two sides. It seems that the cult of Ekānaṃśā was of some importance in Eastern India in mediaeval times. Mention may be made in this connection of a very fine inscribed bronze image of Ekānaṃśā originally recovered from Imadpur (Bihar), and now in the collection of the King Edward VII Gallery of the British Museum. The two-armed goddess stands erect on a lotus, with her right hand stretched down in the *varadamudrā*, her left hand holding a mirror, between the four-armed figures of the snake-hooded Balarāma on her right and Kṛṣṇa on her left. It is true that the disposition of her hands does not tally with the textual description quoted above, but the composition as a whole leaves little doubt that she stands for Ekānaṃśā. The bronze image is cast with great skill, and the model from which it was cast was prepared with a fine sense of artistic balance and proportion.[1]

The number and the names of the Mātṛkās vary in different contexts. They are usually seven, though eight or more of them can also be counted. The Gangdhar stone inscription of the time of Kumārgupta I, already referred to, does not say anything about their exact number, nor does it contain their respective names. The number of the Mothers is, however, given in the preamble of the inscriptions of the early Cālukya kings who are described there as the descendants of Hāritī and nurtured by the seven Mothers (*Hāritī-putrāṇāṃ sapta-Mātṛbhirabhivardhitānām*), though the respective names of these Mothers are not given there.

1 *J.R.A.S.B.*, Letters, Vol. XVI, No. 2, 1950, pp. 247-51, Pl. XII. This image was made during the reign of the Pāla king Mahīpāla.

Varāhamihira also is silent about the number and names of these goddesses, and simply says that ' Mothers are to be made with cognisances of the gods corresponding to their names ' (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, v. 56). Utpala while commenting on this passage, names them as Brāhmī, Vaiṣṇavī, Raudrī (Māheśvarī), Kaumārī, Aindrī, Yāmī, Vāruṇī, and Kauberī in the first instance; then he says that there are other Mātṛgaṇas like Nārasiṃhī, Vārāhī, and Vaināyakī, which are to be understood (*Evamanyāsāṃ Nārasiṃhī-Vārāhī-Vaināyakīnāmāpyuhyam*). It appears that side by side with the common concept about the stereotyped number of the Mothers or Śaktis of seven or eight gods there existed a belief about the Śaktis of other gods or their aspects. In the subsequent ritual literature of the Hindus, the names of as many as sixteen Mātṛkās with Gaurī in the beginning are mentioned (*Gauryādi-Ṣoḍaśa-Mātṛkā*). The *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa* lays down in one verse that the Śaktis of Brahmā, Śiva, Kārttikeya, Viṣṇu and Indra came out of the bodies of the respective gods, and went to help the Devī in her fight with the Asuras (Ch. 88, v. 12). In the next couplet the Purāṇakāra generalises their form in this way, ' the Śaktis of the individual gods (are each characterised by the) respective forms, ornaments and mounts of those gods (*Yasya devasya yadrūpaṃ yathā bhūṣaṇavāhanam* | *Tattadeva tacchaktiḥ* . . . . .). In the verses following are described successively the iconographic features of Brahmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Nārasiṃhī and Aindrī (vv. 14-20). In verse 22 we are told that ' from the goddess's body there came forth Caṇḍikā's Energy (Caṇḍikāśakti) most terrific, exceedingly fierce, howling like a hundred jackals'. The emanating goddess came to be called Śivadūtī, for she appointed Śiva himself as her messenger to the Asuras, Śumbha and Niśumbha. The number of the emanatory Śaktis in this context is eight, seven in the first lot in which Nārasiṃhī takes the place of Cāmuṇḍā, while Caṇḍikāśakti Śivadūtī is the eighth one. But we know from the preceding chapter of the Purāṇa that Kālī who came out of Ambikā's forehead furrowed with wrath against the

demons Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, the mighty Asura generals of Sumbha, was given the name of Cāmuṇḍā by the Devī, for Kālī killed these mighty demons in battle and brought their heads to her (Ch. 87, v. 25—*Yasmāc-Caṇḍañca Muṇḍañca gṛhītvā tvamupāgatā* | *Cāmuṇḍeti tato loke khyātā devī bhaviṣyasi*). But the usually accepted list supported by iconographic data consists of Brahmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Kaumarī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī and Cāmuṇḍī, though there are some variants.

The Sapta Mātṛkās are often carved in relief on a rectangular stone slab in the order given above with the figures of Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa on either side. Stone and bronze sculptures are also not unknown in which the number of the ' Mothers' are only three, and they are usually Brahmānī, Kaumārī and Vaiṣṇavī. One such fine bronze composition, a companion to the Ekānaṃśā bronze just described (originally found at Imadpur and now in the King Edward VII gallery of the British Museum) shows these three goddesses seated between Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa.[1] The *Rūpamaṇḍana* while describing Vīrabhadra's image, says that ' he should be placed before the Mothers, the latter coming in the middle, and Gaṇeśa in the end ' (*Vīreśvaraśca* .....*Mātṛnāmagrato bhavet* | *Madhye ca Mātaraḥ kāryā ante teṣām Vināyakaḥ*). Separate reliefs of the Mātṛkās and their ' guardians ' are also common, and those that are being reproduced here, all belong to this category. The sacred tank at Puri (Orissa) known as Mārkaṇḍeya Sarovara has on one of its banks these separate images placed side by side inside a verandah, and five of the Mātṛkās of this group are now being described and illustrated. Four-faced (the fourth face on the back is not visible) and four-armed Brahmāṇī is seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with her swan mount beneath the couch, with a child on her left lap; the front right hand is in the *vyākhyāna* pose, the front left holding the child (the objects in the back

[1] There is little doubt that these two Imadpur bronzes were cast by the same artist, for the fine technique of modelling and casting in both of them is identical: *J.R.A.S.B.*, Letters. Vol. XVI. No. 2. p. 251, Pl. XIII.

hands are not distinct in the plate, they may stand for a sacrificial ladle and a manuscript or a rosary). The figure does not wear any ornaments, but the sacred thread and the *jaṭāmukuṭa* are prominently shown (Pl. XLIII, Fig. 1). Māheśvarī seated in the same attitude with her bull mount beneath the couch wears many ornaments; her back hands are broken, the front right hand appears to have been in the *abhaya* pose, while the front left holds the child on her left lap, which is gone (Pl. XLIII, Fig. 5). Four-armed Kaumārī similarly seated is shown with the child on her lap and her peacock mount beneath her couch; her two right hands are broken, the back left hand holds an indistinct object, the front left clasping the child. She wears many ornaments, but the *śikhaṇḍaka* mode of her hair arrangement reminds one of the similar coiffure of the Puri Kārttikeya already described in Chapter IX of this book (Pl. XLIII, Fig. 3). The terrific nature of Vārāhī is emphasised by the two rows of the curled locks of hair rising upwards, the *kapāla* in the back left hand, and her tusks; the child on the lap (now broken) emphasises her Mātṛkā aspect, and her buffalo mount is shown below her couch (Pl. XLIV, Fig. 3). A recent acquisition from a village in the district of Hooghly for the Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta, shows one four-armed form of the Mātṛkā in question, with a fish in one of her right hands; this has not yet been published. The fish in one of the hands of Vārāhī is unique, and perhaps indicates some Tāntric trait (fish, *matsya*, is one of the five '*ma*'s, *i.e.*, *pañca-makāra*). The four-armed Indrāṇī with the elephant beneath her couch is more pleasing to look at; her front right and back left hands are gone, the back right holds a *vajra*, the front left clasping the child on her left lap. She also wears many ornaments, and her royal head-gear and the ear-ornaments are worth noticing (Pl. XLIV, Fig. 4). Compared with these stiff hieratic sculptures from Puri, the figure of the four-armed Vaiṣṇavī with Garuḍa beneath her seat, which hails from Khiching (fixed in a niche in the Khandiya Deul there), is a real object of art. The goddess gracefully

holds the *cakra* and *śaṅkha* in her back hands, has her front right hand in the *abhaya* pose and clasps the child with her front left; the several ornaments including the artistic crown are tastefully displayed, and the mellow introspective look on her face has been beautifully shown by the artist (Pl. XLIV, Fig. 1). The two reliefs that are now being reproduced illustrate in a characteristic manner the Indian idea of the terrific, weird and uncanny in the realm of iconographic art. Both are from Jajpur (Orissa) which is regarded as the Virajākṣetra, an old seat of Tāntric worship. The first of these reliefs depicts the most fearful goddess Cāmuṇḍā. She has four arms, emaciated body and shrunken belly showing the protruding ribs and veins, skull-garland (*muṇḍamālā*), her corpse seat (*pretāsana*, but the dead body has its hand in the *anjali* pose), bare teeth and sunken eyes with round projecting eye-balls, bald head with flames issuing from it. She holds in her back hands a *kartṛ* (chopper) and a *śūla*, while her front right and left ones hold a *kapāla* and a *muṇḍa* (human head) respectively; the skull on the armlet on her right hand has a grinning smile on its face, while the severed head in her left hand has a life-like expression. The Orissan artist has skilfully produced one of the most terror-striking images, not a lifeless fetish of an uncultured people, but a concrete representation of the esoteric symbolism underlying one aspect of the Tāntric faith (Pl. XLIV, Fig. 5). The second sculpture depicts the Danturā form of the dire goddess Cāmuṇḍā (it does not represent Śivadūtī as it has been described in the records of the Indian Museum) and shows the two-armed emaciated Devī sitting on her haunches with long distended ears, lean pendulous breasts and projecting ribs, an evil cruel smile lurking in her broad bare face; the mocking and ghastly expression of the whole face is further emphasised by the way in which the eyes are shown. All these features endow the sculpture with a character, and prove that the artist has been able to portray in a remarkable manner the weird and the uncanny in Indian sculptural art (Pl. XLV, Fig. 1). Some *ugra*

types of Devī images are in the Varendra Research Society's Museum at Rajshahi, but the one which comes very close to the Jajpur sculpture is in the collection of the Bangiya Sahitya Parisad Museum, Calcutta. This image was originally recovered from Aṭṭahāsa (Burdwan, Bengal), one of the fifty-one *Śaktipīṭhas* in India according to one enumeration of these *pīṭhas* (*Dacca History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 455, Pl. XIV, Fig. 36). A third relief originally hailing from Sutna (Madhya Bharat) and now in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, depicts an eight-armed (most of the hands are gone) image of Nārasiṃhī seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose on the back of a stylised lion. The goggle-eyed lion-face of the goddess and the face of the lion mount opened wide as it were for a mighty roar endow the composition with a grotesque character, this grotesqueness being partially relieved by the modelling of the body of the main image (Pl. XLIV, Fig. 2). It may be mentioned in this connection that most of the Śakti images that have been described above have corresponding texts generally supporting their iconographic features.

It is now a relief to turn to the study of a very remarkable sculpture created by the genius of an unknown Bengali artist of mediaeval times, to satisfy the religious needs of a pious worshipper of Śiva and Śakti in a corner of Bengal. Bhattasali says, ' The unique image was discovered in the ruins of Vikrampur, within the limits of the ancient capital of the Senas and their predecessors, in the quarter known as Kagajipara ' (*op. cit.*, p. 192). Four feet in height it shows in its lower part a well-carved Śivaliṅga, from the top of which emerges the half-length figure of a four-armed goddess with her front hands in the *dhyāna-mudrā*, the back hands carrying a rosary and a manuscript. The Devī is profusely ornamented, and her beautifully carved youthful face with three eyes has a serene meditative expression which is lacking in most of the Devī images described above (Pl. XLV, Fig. 2). There has been some difficulty about the correct identification of the image, but whatever may be its real character, it cannot be interpreted

in the way in which it has been done by R. D. Banerji. He finds in it an evidence of gradual blending of ' Buddhist Tāntrism with Hindu Tāntrism,' and he suggests that ' the goddess (evidently Pārvatī) is in *co-itus* with the phallus '. Bhattasali's tentative explanation of this sculpture as Mahāmāyā on the authority of the Prādhānika-rahasya of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* and a *Kālikāpurāṇa* passage (Ch. 76, 83-93) is far more acceptable. The Purāṇic descriptions of Mahāmāyā, it is true, do not fully tally with this unique composite icon, but one main peculiarity of the goddess as described in the latter text that she ' rent open the Śivaliṅga and came out ' agrees with the general outline of the sculpture. The ideology about Ādyāśakti, the source of all the manifestations of the universe, coming forth from the eternal Puruṣa, can be traced to a *Bhagavadgītā* passage (XV, 4 : *Tameva cādyaṃ puruṣaṃ prapadye yataḥ pravṛtti prasṛtā purāṇī*). The goddess Tripurā-Bhairavī, as we know from another passage in the *Kālikāpurāṇa*, is the same as Mahāmāyā, and she holds a rosary and a book according to the description given here, and this also appears to support Bhattasali's identification.[1] The esoteric symbolism underlying this fine sculpture is of a sublime character, and this is a unique mode of representing Śiva and Śakti together, as the Elephanta sculpture already noted and the Ardhanārīśvara motif to be noticed in Section II of the next chapter are other ways of combining the primaeval parents of the Universe, Pārvatī and Parameśvara, Śiva and Śakti, in one composite form.

[1] For R. D. Banerji's interpretation, *cf. A.S.I.A.R.*, 1924-25, p. 155, *E.I.S.M.S.*, p. 100. For Bhattasali's explanation, *cf. Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, pp. 192-94.

CHAPTER XII

Miscellaneous and Syncretistic Icons

Brahmā

To the first member of the orthodox Brahmanical triad, Brahmā, is assigned the act of creation in Hindu mythology. His position in the pantheon is, however, inferior to that of any of the principal cult deities like Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Śiva and Durgā, nay, even Gaṇapati. The very act of creating this universe and peopling it, which is supposed to have been his main duty, is primarily attributed by the followers of these cults to the respective divinities of their choice. The picture that we get of Brahmā from the Purāṇas, or sections of them associated with one or other of these cults, is usually of an inane and helpless god, having very little practical initiative of his own. The initiative almost invariably rests with the principal cult deities, Brahmā being at best represented in the role of a mediator with the more important among them on behalf of other deities and persons of lesser importance approaching him for help and advice in times of distress and danger.

Such was, however, not his position, when the concrete concept about him and gods allied to him began to take shape and develop in some of the late Vedic texts. Many sections of this literature contain passages about creation, and the creator is described there by various names like Viśvakarman, Brahmaṇaspati, Hiraṇyagarbha, Prajāpati, Brahma and Brahmā. Viśvakarman is characterised in the 81st and 82nd hymns of the tenth maṇḍala of the *Ṛgveda*; in the first of them he is described as the one god who has produced the sky and earth and shaped them with his hands (*Saṃ bāhubhyāṃ dhamati saṃ patatrair dyāvā-bhūmiṃ janayan devaḥ ekaḥ*). Brahmaṇaspati, another god of allied nature, is said to have shaped all these (created things) like a blacksmith (*R.V.*, X. 72, 2: *Brahmaṇaspatir-eta saṃ karmāraḥ ivādhamat*). Hiraṇyagarbha is assumed to have been the first to be born, and is said to have established the earth and the sky in their proper position (*ibid.*, X. 121, 1). In the last verse of the same hymn Prajāpati is described as the lord of all the created beings. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI. 2, 3, 1) Brahma (neuter) is said to have existed alone in the beginning and to have been the creator of the gods and the original source of all things. Another passage of the same text (X. 6, 5, 9), tells us that Prajāpati originated from Brahma who is self-existent (*Prajāpatir-Brahmaṇaḥ, Brahma svayambhū*). Both these gods along with Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa are described in the different sections of this *Brāhmaṇa* as having sacrificed themselves for acquiring superiority over gods, men and all created things. Prajāpati is also the supporter (*bharataḥ*) of this universe, a function invariably assigned to Viṣṇu in the epic and Purāṇic literature. The same god is also identified in some passages with the presiding deity of sacrifice with which Viṣṇu is also identified in one passage of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (III. 2, 2, 4; XIV. 1, 1, 6). The more concrete concept of Brahmā took some time to develop and one of the earliest allusions to this god is to be found in the first verse of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*. He is described there as the first of the gods, who was the creator of the universe and the preserver of the world (*Brahmā devānāṃ prathamaḥ sambabhūva viśvasya kartā bhuvanasya goptā*). Lastly, we find in the first canto of the *Manusaṃhitā* how the irresistible self-existent (*svayambhū*) Lord was born in the golden egg (*haimaṃ aṇḍaṃ*) as Brahmā, the progenitor of all the worlds (*tasmin jajñe svayaṃ Brahmā sarvalokapitāmahaḥ*). It is also interesting to note that the appellation Nārāyaṇa is applied in this context to Brahmā and not to Viṣṇu. There is no doubt that this part of the great Smṛti text is based on passages of the much older texts like the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and others in which it is said how Prajāpati assumed the forms of fish, tortoise and boar for the attainment of particular ends.

The concept of the concrete god Brahmā, also known by such names as Prajāpati, Dhātā, Vidhātā, Pitāmaha, etc., was further developed in the epic literature, though it does not necessarily mean that his position *vis-à-vis* that of the other great cult gods was made more prominent.[1] But it is at the same time apparent that he was enjoying some importance in the period during which the earlier sections of the epics were composed. The various mythologies associated with him there invest him with some power which he undoubtedly inherited from his late Vedic and Brahmanic prototypes. He is regarded as the creator, preserver and destroyer, all at the same time, and it is in the later sections of the two epics that his position is gradually weakened and his honours and activities become more or less of a titular character. One of the causes of this gradual decline may be traced to the fundamental weakness of his character, which led him to be equally susceptible to the ascetic practices not only of the gods, but also of the demons who on many occasions bring disaster to the universe with the power acquired by propitiating Brahmā by the practice of severe austerities. In fact, the epic and Purāṇic tales about the great cult gods Viṣṇu and Śiva exerting themselves to set matters right on these occasions emphasise in a way the greatness of these gods in comparison with that of Brahmā. The latter now gets subservient to them; he is born from the lotus issuing forth from Viṣṇu's navel, he worships the horse-headed form of Viṣṇu and receives the law from him, and he becomes the demiurge of the great cult god. In some epic passages Śiva is described as creating the creator, Brahmā praises the greatness of Śiva, and reveals to Indra the great power of Mahādeva. The Mandasor Stone Inscription of Yaśodharman Viṣṇuvardhana of the Mālava Samvat 589 (A.D. 533-34) refers, it is true, to Brahmā as creator, preserver and destroyer, but in all these acts

[1] The following are some of the names of Brahmā collected by Hopkins from the two epics :—Viśveśa, Sraṣṭṛ, Lokaguru, Lokavṛddha, Suraguru (a confusion with Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the gods), Lokabhāvana, Lokeśvareśvara, Lokādinidhaneśvara, Ādideva, Bhūtātman, etc.; *Epic Mythology*, p. 192.

Svayambhū is employed by Śambhu (Śiva) and is obedient to Śiva's commands, and Śiva is described in the same context as *bhavasṛj*, i.e., ' the creator of the universe ' (*C.I.I.*, III, p. 152-55). Thus, Brahmā is merely a figurehead in these matters. This decline in Brahmā's position is persistent, and some of the Purāṇas take advantage of many of the vaguely allegorical, deprecatory myths associated with Prajāpati in the later Vedic texts and the Brāhmaṇas, and cast all sorts of opprobrium on him.[1] One of the early Purāṇas, the *Mārkaṇḍeya*, paints him as helpless to defend himself from the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha, from whose clutches he is saved by Viṣṇu's timely intervention.

Brahmā appears to have enjoyed no success as a cult god. It is true that he illustrates in a way an aspect of Vedism, one of the constituent elements of the composite Hinduism of the epic and Purāṇic times, but if any attempt was ever made by an orthodox Vedic section of the Hindus to formulate his cult in imitation of those of Viṣṇu and Śiva, it was destined to failure. Reference has already been made in a previous chapter of this book (Ch. VI, p. 230) to Varāhamihira's injunction that Brahmā's images could only be installed by those who were well-versed in the Vedic lore (*Viprān vidur-Brahmaṇaḥ*). The analogous references by the same author to the Bhāgavatas, the Pāśupatas, the Magas, etc., being only entitled to instal the images of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Śūrya, may suggest that these persons, ' well-versed in the Vedas ', were the exclusive worshippers of Brahmā. But if there were such a sect at all, they did not enjoy any great importance. This hypothesis is substantiated by the Purāṇic stories connected with such Śaiva

[1] The myth of Brahmā's incestuous love for his own daughter as noticed in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (I. 7, 4, 1ff.) can be traced to the *Ṛgveda* passage (X. 61, 4) which seems to refer to some atmospheric phenomenon; this story is further elaborated in the *Matsya*, *Bhāgavata* and other Purāṇas to the detriment of this god. Brahmā's passion for telling lies is to be noted in the sectarian story explaining the Liṅgodbhavamūrti of Śiva whose Bhairava form is sometimes described as Brahmaśiraśchedakamūrti (the form in which he cut off one of the superfluous heads of Brahmā).

icons as the Liṅgodbhavamūrti ; Brahmā was cursed by Śiva for telling a lie not to have any cult of his own. Separate temples enshrining Brahmā are very few and far between, and mention may be made here of the early mediaeval and later Brahmā shrines found at Dudahi and Khajuraho (Madhya Bharat), Vasantgaḍh (Rajputana), Unkal (near Hubli, Dharwar district), and Kheḍ Brahmā (Mahi Kantha). The Dudahi temple was well-built having many artistic carvings ; the presence of a three-headed figure of the bearded Brahmā with his swan mount on the centre of the sanctum doorway and the evidence of an inscription found there recording that the writer paid his adoration to Caturmukha (an appellation of Brahmā) and his wife Sāvitrī, led Cunningham to ascribe this shrine to Brahmā with certainty (*A.S.R.*, Vol. X, pp. 93-4, Pl. XXXI). A small square temple of the god was noticed by the same scholar at Khajuraho, which he thought to have been the oldest of the extant shrines at the place (*Ibid.*, Vol. XXI, p. 57). The Vasantgaḍh (Rajputana) brick temple of the god is as old as the 7th century A.D., which faces east and has a standing life-size image of Brahmā with three faces and a nimbus behind him ; the figure is two-armed, the hands holding an *akṣamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu*. The interest attaching to the temple of the god at Kheḍ Brahmā (Idar, Mahi Kantha) is great, for it was still functioning in 1906-07, when it was visited by Henry Cousens. Cousens writes that there is a community of Brahmans at the place who have been there for generations, who devote themselves exclusively to the worship of Brahmā ; they are *Audīcya* Brahmans (Brahmans of the north), are followers of the *Śukla Yajurveda*, and are entrusted with the ritual worship of the shrine deity. Another interesting feature of this Brahmā temple is its three Pārśvadevatās which are three images of Brahmā (or three aspects of the god), one placed on each of the three principal niche of the temple. Brahmā on the western niche has the usual symbols in his hands (*sruk*, *pustaka*, *akṣamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu*), but he has a bull (Nandin) as his mount; a similar figure on the northern face has a horse below him, and the small figure with wings beneath another similar figure on the south side may be Garuḍa. These traits of the Pārśvadevatās would appear to associate Brahmā with Śiva, Sūrya and Viṣṇu, for the mounts are connected with the latter. An interesting exhibit in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta (No. Gr. 18), may be noted in this connection. It is a carved door-lintel in stone (hornblende schist) from Gauḍ, District Malda (Bengal), showing the figure of standing Brahmā, three-faced and four-armed, flanked by his two consorts, Sarasvatī and Sāvitrī, and other attendants dancing and playing on musical instruments. The figure of Brahmā in the centre of the composition proves that the small shrine, over the doorway of which the slab rested, was dedicated to this god. Its size can be guessed from that of the carved lintel which measures 5′ 10″ × 1′ 8″. It is very likely that it originally belonged to a Pañcāyatana temple of about the middle of the tenth century A.D., in which the shrine of Brahmā was a subsidiary one. Another temple of Brahmā, that is still functioning, is at Pushkar near Ajmer ; the big temple there is linked up with the shrine of his consort Sāvitrī on a hill about a mile distant from it. This sacred Tīrtha is frequented by Hindus of different cult affiliations, and its existence does not necessarily mean the existence of any Brahmā cult there in modern times. The present shrine of the god at the place is not more than 160 years old, for Tod writes in 1806-07 that it was built about four years ago ; but it was built on the site of older religious establishments. The temple priests, however, belong to the community of Puri Gosains unlike those at Kheḍ Brahmā.[1] Pushkara is a very old Tīrtha ; reference is made to it in the Nasik inscription of Uṣabhadāta, Nahapāna's son-in-law, but there is no clear proof whether it was associated with Brahmā worship at that early age.[2]

[1] For the Vasantgaḍh Brahmā temple, see *Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, Western Circle, 1905-06, p. 50. For the Kheḍ Brahmā shrine, see *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1906-07, pp. 176-77.

[2] T. P. Bhattacharya has recently published two articles on ' The Cult of Brahmā ' (*J.B.R.S.*, Vol. XL, pp. 364-94, and Vol. XLI, pp. 13-58). He tries

One of the earliest iconographic descriptions of the god is to be found in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Ch. 57, v. 41). The passage says that the four-faced god holds a ritual water-vessel (*kamaṇḍalu*) in one of his hands and is seated on a lotus (*Brahmā kamaṇḍalukaraścaturmukhaḥ paṅkajāsanasthaśca.*) In this summary description, there is no reference to the number of hands, and the attribute of one of these only is mentioned; the lotus-seat is there, but the god's swan mount is not. In the line quoted by Utpala from Kāśyapa in the last part of his commentary on this chapter, Brahmā is described as four-faced having a staff, the hide of a black antelope and a ritual water-vessel (*Brahmā caturmukho daṇḍī kṛṣṇājinakamaṇḍalī, Bṛhat saṃhitā*, Dvivedi's edition, p. 785). This account seems to emphasise the character of the god as a Brahmacārin wearing a black antelope skin as his upper garment, his two hands holding a staff and a ritual water-vessel. If we compare these somewhat sketchy descriptions of a presumably earlier date with texts about Brahmā images quoted by Rao from *Aṃśumadbhedāgama, Suprabhedāgama, Śilparatna, Viṣṇupurāṇa*, and *Rūpamaṇḍana*, we can at once see the great elaboration that has taken place in the iconic representation of the god. The following are some of the additional details: his hands are invariably four in number, the attributes in them being a rosary, *sruk, sruva* (sacrificial implements), the Vedas etc.; he rides on a swan or on a chariot drawn by seven swans (this is evidently adopted from the seven-horsed chariot of Sūrya); having Sāvitrī on his left and Sarasvatī on his right side, he wears white garments, *jaṭāmukuṭa*, jewelled ear-rings, is white in colour, etc. Yet it is curious that in none of these elaborate accounts there is an explicit reference to his face or faces being bearded, though the Ṛṣis who accompany him in a Brahmāyatana (? a Brahmā shrine) are described as bearded (*śmaśrula*, Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, App. B. pp. 243-47). It

to prove in them that 'the Brahmā cult is non-Vedic and pre-Vedic', and he infers 'the antiquity of the Rātra cults of Brahmā from their existence in the period when the ancient Sumerians, Cretans and Egyptians lived on this world'.

is true, however, that all the later images of Brahmā have bearded faces, most of the earlier ones being shown without this trait. The evidence of the Navagraha reliefs on the Bhauma-Kara and Gaṅga shrines at Bhuvanesvara (Orissa) should be cited in this connection. The two spiritual preceptors of the Devas and Daityas, Bṛhaspati and Śukra, are shown invariably without beards in the earlier shrines of the Bahuma-Kara period there, while the same Deva- and Daitya-gurus in the later Gaṅga shrines have always been endowed with beards and moustaches (*cf. supra*, p. 444).[1]

Some of the earliest representations of Brahmā are found in the Buddhist reliefs of Gandhāra; his figure is used there either in the Nativity scene of Buddha or as one of Buddha's acolytes. He is invariably shown in them as having profuse dishevelled hair, beard and moustache, being dressed in the garments of a Brahman, one of his two hands holding a water-vessel. Such figures are, however, not hieratic, for they are presented from the unorthodox Buddhist point of view. The later Jaina representations of Brahmā, either as a Yakṣa attendant of the Jina Śītalanātha or as one of the Dikpālas are endowed with a great deal of hieratism, even perhaps more pronounced than in their originals in the Brahmanical pantheon. The earliest ones of these originals are mostly two-armed and three- or four-faced, the faces being usually shown without a beard; the four-armed images are, as a class, of a later period. The stone image of Brahmā in the collection of the Mathura Museum (No. 382) shows the four-faced god with faces arranged in a peculiar manner. Three of them are put in one line, the fourth one being placed over the central head; none of the faces, however, is shown bearded (the figure is of the Kushan period).[2] The standing Brahmā image of the Gupta period in the same Museum (No. 2481) shows him

[1] K. D. Bajpai refers to some Brahmā figures of the third-fourth centuries A.D. in the collection of the Mathura Museum, which have four or three bearded faces (in the case of the four-faced one where three faces are shown in one line and the fourth face is placed over the central face, the fourth super-imposed face does not show any beard); *Baroda State Museum Bulletin*, No. 5, p. 18.

[2] K. D. Bajpai, *Ibid.*, p. 18.

three-faced, its middle face only being bearded; the god is two-armed, the right hand being in the *abhaya* pose. An image of the god belonging to the early Chālukya period hailing from Aihole is illustrated by Rao. The god is seated astride on the back of his swan mount (an unusual sitting posture) his four hands holding a rosary, a manuscript and two other indistinct objects; he is surrounded by a number of Ṛṣis in bowing and praising poses, who are all shown bearded (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 506, Pl. CXLIV). The other Brahmā relief from the same place illustrated by him shows some variations; the three beardless faces are there, but the god is seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus-seat, and his four hands show a rosary, a noose, a water-vessel and *varamudrā* (*ibid*, Pl. CXLVI). The Kumbakonam and Halebidu reliefs of Brahmā of the early Chola and late Hoysala schools, reproduced by Rao (*ibid*, Pl. CXLVII) are Sthānakamūrtis of the god, the latter showing his two consorts, Sāvitrī and Sarasvatī; but the faces of the god have no beards. One of the most remarkable and earliest figures of the god is the metal image found at Mirpur Khas in Sindh (it is now in the Karachi Museum). It is of great iconographic interest, for it does not correspond to the usual mode of representation of the deity. As the image is fully in the round, all four beardless faces of the god are shown; it is two-armed, the right hand being bent with the palm turned inwards as if holding a book (this pose is not described in the texts), the left hand holding probably a water-vessel (it is broken, its handle only being shown). Clad in diaphanously treated garments, and probably wearing a deer skin in the *upavītī* fashion, this bronze figure of the god presents to us a fine specimen of the Indian metallurgists' art of the late Gupta or early mediaeval period (Pl. XLV, Fig. 3). Brahmā in the lintel piece from Gauḍ (Malda) previously noted has three beardless faces, the left hands carrying a water-vessel and a sacrificial ladle, the two right ones being broken; both Sarasvatī and Sāvitrī are four-armed, the former showing *varamudrā*, *akṣamālā*, *vīṇā* and *kamaṇḍalu* in her four hands, while the latter

holds *caurī*, *akṣamālā* and *pustaka* by three of her hands, the lower left one being in the *kaṭihasta* pose. An elaborately carved image of Brahmā seated on a *viśvapadma* in the *lalitākṣepa* pose in the Rajshahi Museum collection is interesting. Though it is of the late mediaeval period, the carving is not indifferent, and such details as the pot-bellied character of the god, the two-armed standing female attendants holding *cauri* in their hands, the swan mount, the donor couple, the garland-bearing flying Vidyādharas, etc. are all systematically displayed (*DHB*, Vol. I, p. 439, Pl. V, Fig. 15).

Many of the images of Brahmā that have been just discussed are of a subsidiary character, having been used either as Āvaraṇadevatās or as accessory figures in the shrines of the major cult deities. His figure also appears in ' relief compositions ' associated with Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism, some of which have already been noted. The god is seated on a lotus, the stalk of which issues from Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu's navel, in the Anantaśayana reliefs; in the Liṅgodbhavamūrtis of Śiva, Brahmā is shown first as soaring upwards along the side of a ' columnar Śivaliṅga ', and then as standing by its side with his front hands in the *namaskāra mudrā*; in the Tripurāntakamūrti of Śiva, he is shown as the charioteer of the great god, and in Śiva's Kalyānasundaramūrti, Brahmā is shown as the officiating priest in the marriage ceremony of Śiva and Umā. In the Ekapāda-Trimūrti of Śiva or its Vaiṣṇava counterpart, Śiva or Viṣṇu occupies the central position, Brahmā being invariably shown as a lateral accretion in the attitude of bowing to the central deity.

Aṣṭadikpālas

The Hindu concept about the Dikpālas or Lokapālas, the guardians of the quarters or the worlds, is very old. In the well-developed Purāṇic mythology the names of the deities, and those of the major and subsidiary quarters over which they had their respective jurisdiction, are the following:—Indra is the lord of the east, Yama of the south,

Varuṇa of the west and Kubera of the north; Agni, Niṛṛti, Vāyu and Īśāna are the respective guardians of the south-east, south-west, north-west and north-east. We do not, however, find this stereotyping in far earlier texts, where there is a great variety in the enumeration of the protectors of the various quarters or the worlds. Early Buddhist and Jaina texts also differ from one another in their characterisation of this group of divinities. Sūrya, Candra, Vāyu, Agni, Yama, Varuṇa, Indra and Kubera, the eight great Devas of the early epic literature, are grouped in some later texts as the guardians of the four chief and four minor quarters, or simply as 'Lokapālas'. Thus, Manu tells us that 'a king embodies in his self all the eight Lokapālas, Soma (Candra), Agni, Arka (Sūrya), Anila (Vāyu), Indra, Vittapati (Kubera), Āpapati (Varuṇa) and Yama'.[1] The first list, which is later in point of date, differs from the second one in substituting Niṛṛti and Īśāna for Sūrya and Candra in the latter. The number, the names and associations of these Dikpālas or Lokapālas are not always constant in the epic literature, and it appears that their regular number was at first four. It is expressly laid down in the *Mahābhārata* (VIII. 45. 31 f.) that 'the gods living in the East have Agni as their leader; Yama of noble deeds guards the Pitṛs (manes) in the South; the West is guarded by Varuṇa who also guards other gods; the North is guarded by Bhagavat Soma and the priests'. Hopkins correctly observes that 'the grouping of Agni, Yama, Varuṇa and Indra seems older than when Kubera is substituted for Agni'.[2] Four Lokapālas are recognised in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and Indra, Yama, Varuna and Kubera, respectively imparting greatness, restraint, beauty and wealth to the ideal first king, are the respective guardians of the eastern, southern, western and northern quarters. A comparison may be made of the epic and Purāṇic lists of these gods

[1] *Manusmṛti*, v. 96: *Somāgnyarkānilendrāṇāṃ vittāpapatyoryamasya ca ‖ Aṣṭānāṃ lokapālānāṃ vapurdhārayate nṛpaḥ‖*

[2] *Epic Mythology*, p. 149.

with the names of the regents of the quarters as given in the later Vedic texts. The *Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra*, while describing the rites connected with the building of a house (*vāstuśamana*), mentions that 'ten offerings (*bali*) are to be made to the regents of the ten regions (*diśas*)—namely, to Indra (E.), Vāyu (S.E.), Yama (S.), Pitaras (S.W.), Varuṇa (W.), Mahārāja (N.W.), Soma (N.), Mahendra (N.E.), Vāsuki (downwards), and Brahmā (upwards in the sky, *i.e.*, throwing the *bali* into the air)'.[1] The *Atharvaveda*, however, enumerates only six quarters (four major ones, the two other ones being the 'fixed quarter' and the 'upward quarter'), and associates with each particular groups of divinities as 'regents' and 'wardens' (*adhipati* and *rakṣitā*). The gods—Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Viṣṇu and Bṛhaspati—are the respective regents of the eastern, southern, western, northern, fixed and upward quarters, while the Nāgas—Asita, Tiraścirāji, Pṛdāku, Svaja, Kalmāsagrīva and Śvitra—are the wardens of these quarters respectively.[2] The *Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda* (*Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, V. 5-10) also mentions the six quarters with their six regents and wardens, the names of which are the same as quoted from the *Atharvaveda;* there is, however, a little difference, Viṣṇu being substituted by Yama as the regent of the fixed quarter in this list. There is no doubt that the concept about the fixed group of four or eight Lokapālas (Dikpālas) of later Hindu mythology originated from these later Saṃhitā texts. In Buddhist mythology too we find a group of four divine beings associated with the four principal quarters, and the Sanskrit Buddhist texts give us a stereotyped list of four; they are Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the Gandharva king (east), Virūḍhaka, the king of the Kumbhāṇḍas (south), Virūpākṣa, the Nāga monarch (west) and Vaiśravaṇa, the Yakṣa king (north). They are the

[1] *Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra*, xiv iv. 7, 37-41 (*S.B.E.*, Vol. XXX, p. 123); *cf.* also Vogel, *Indian Serpent-Lore*, p. 198. The *Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa* mentions the same thing in connection with its description of the *Vāstupraśamana* ceremony (iii. 3, 5).

[2] *Atharvaveda Saṃhitā*, English Translation by W. D. Whitney, First Half, pp. 133-34.

Catur-Mahārājas of some Buddhist texts, and Pāṇini seems to have had them in his mind when he referred to their bhaktas in one of his *sūtras* (*cf. supra*, p. 85). The Jaina literature refers to a group of the Dikpālas, most of whose names and associations being similar to the stereotyped list of the later Hindu mythological texts.[1]

Rao, in connection with his description of the images of the Dikpālas wrongly observes that ' all these eight deities held prominent positions in the Vedic period ' (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 515). Two at least among them, Kubera and Īśāna, did not do so, and it has already been pointed out by the present writer that even Patañjali knew Śiva and Vaiśravaṇa (Īśāna and Kubera) as *laukika devatās* or folk gods (*cf. supra*, p. 338). The six others are all Vedic deities, some among them being more important than the others. Indra was originally the most prominent of all the Vedic gods, and now in this context he had to be satisfied with the much more modest position of the guardian of the eastern quarter. Indra had really no cult of his own in the proper sense of the term, but the orthodox section of the Indian people undoubtedly paid their homage to him. In the story of the uplifting of the Govardhana mountain by Kṛṣṇa, the worship of Indra by the upper classes of the Indians is alluded to, but this does not necessarily mean that he had his exclusive worshippers. Annual festivals in honour of Indra were sometimes in vogue, and Rao refers to such festivals in Southern India in the early mediaeval period. The *Śilappadigaram* (c. 8th century A.D.) states that Indra festival beginning on the Vaiśākhī Purṇimā was continued for 28 days at Kāvirippumpaṭṭinam, the metropolis of the Cholas. Some details about the manner of celebrating such a festival are recorded in an inscription of

[1] They are Indra (east), Agni (south-east), Yama (south), Nairṛta (south-west), Varuṇa (west), Vāyu (north-west), Kubera (north), Īśāna (north-east), Brahmā (upper region) and Nāga (nether region). In this Śvetāmbara list of the Dikpālas, Brahmā and Nāga are additional ones, the Digambaras leaving them out in their list, and accepting the stereotyped list of the later Hindu mythology; P. C. Bhattacharya, *Jaina Iconography*, pp. 147-57.

Parantaka Chola I (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 518). The homage that was paid to him, however, was mostly in his capacity as a Dikpāla, and his images were chiefly meant to be placed in a particular part of the shrines of the principal cult deities. Varāhamihira describes his figure in this manner: ' The elephant (mount) of Mahendra (Indra) is white and has four tusks; (the god) has a thunderbolt in his hand, and has as his cognisance the third eye placed horizontally on his forehead '.[1] The *Viṣṇudharmottara* gives us an elaborate description of the four-armed Śakra (Indra) in which āre not only mentioned his third eye and the four-tusked elephant mount, but is also mentioned his four-armed consort Śacī seated on his lap; the symbolism underlying all his other iconographic traits are also elaborated there (Bk. II, ch. 50, vv. 1-13). The *Aṃśumadbhedāgama* and a few other south-Indian texts describe the image of Indra in more or less identical terms, the god being two-armed, his hands carrying either *śakti* and *aṅkuśa*, or, *vajra* and *aṅkuśa* (or a *nīlotpala*); he has usually two eyes, but some enjoin that he should be shown as four-armed and three-eyed, the third eye placed horizontally on the forehead.

Some of the earliest representations of Śakra or Indra are to be found in the Buddhist relief compositions of Gandhāra and Mathura. He and Brahmā are the two acolytes of Buddha, and his iconography has some fixed character in these reliefs. His so-called ' basket-like ' head-dress is nothing but an alien adaptation of the *kirīṭa*, and *vajra* is one of his constant emblems there. In the red sandstone relief from Mathura illustrating the scene of the visit of Indra to Buddha residing in the Indraśālaguhā, the god is accompanied by his mount, the elephant Airāvata. Some of the stone reliefs in the Paharpur basement illustrate a few of the Dikpālas, and one of them shows two-armed Indra standing, facing east, before his mount, holding an indistinct object (? a citrus) in his left hand, his right hand being in the *varada* pose; he has a jewelled *kirīṭamukuṭa* on

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, v. 42: *Śuklaścaturviṣāṇo dvipo Mahendrasya vajrapāṇitvam | Tiryaglalāṭasaṃstham tṛtīyamapi locanaṃ cihnam ||*

his head with a halo behind it and the horizontally placed third eye on the forehead (K. N. Dikshit, *Paharpur*, p. 46, Pl. XXVIId). The four-armed figure of Indra seated astride on the back of his elephant from the Chidambaram temple has its front hands in the *varada* and *abhaya* poses, the back ones carrying the *aṅkuśa* and *vajra* (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 520, Pl. CL).

Agni, the lord of the south-eastern quarter is not described in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* gives us an elaborate and characteristic description of the god, in which he is bearded, four-armed, four-tusked, three-eyed, riding a chariot with smoke standard drawn by four parrots and driven by wind, having his consort Svāhā on his left lap, holding flames, trident and rosary in his hands. (Bk. III, Ch. 56, vv. 1-10). The *Mahābhārata* describes him as having seven red tongues (*saptajihva*), with smoke for his standard and head-gear, holding a flaming spear, riding on a chariot drawn by seven red horses, the winds being the wheels of his chariot; the god has seven faces, a huge mouth, red neck, tawny eyes, bright gleaming hair and golden steed (*Epic Mythology*, p. 97; these descriptions of Agni are collected by Hopkins from the various sections of the Great Epic). The Āgamas characterise the god as having four arms, three eyes, red *jaṭās*, with the front hands showing *varada* and *abhaya* poses, the back ones holding *sruk* and *śakti*. The figure of Agni (of the mediaeval period) reproduced here (PL. XLV, Fig. 4) does not correspond to any of the descriptions just quoted. It shows the pot-bellied two-armed god seated on the back of his mount (a ram or a goat) in the *paryaṅkāsana* (so-called ' European fashion ') holding a rosary in his right hand and a water-vessel in his left; he has beard, an angry stare, long waving flames emanating from his body, sacred thread and a few ornaments. The Paharpur basement figure of Agni of an earlier date shows the two-armed god standing holding a rosary and a water-vessel in his two hands; flames issue forth from his sides, but his mount is not shown (K. N. Dikshit, *ibid.*, p. 48, Pl. XXXII, Fig. b). The

figure of Agni from the Śiva temple at Kandiyur (Travancore) described and illustrated by Rao (*ibid.*, p. 524, Pl. CLII) is very interesting. The god has two goat-heads (according to some Purāṇic texts, Agni has a goat as his mount) seven arms and three legs. It has some affinity with the Chidambaram sculpture described as Agni by Rao; but in it the god stands in front of a bull (*ibid.*, Pl. CLIII, Fig. 2). It has, however, been pointed out by the present writer, that the Chidambaram figure may really represent Yajñapuruṣa, one of the minor manifestations of Viṣṇu (*J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 46-7).

Yama, the guardian of the south, is described in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* simply as ' having a staff in his hand and riding on a buffalo ' (*daṇḍī Yamo mahiṣago*; Ch. 57, v. 57). The *Viṣṇudharmottara* gives us an elaborate description of the four-armed god seated on a buffalo with his consort Dhumrorṇā on his left lap, his right hands holding a staff and a sword and the left ones a trident with flames and a rosary, a face with flames issuing from it being shown on the top of the staff (it might thus stand for a *khaṭvāṅga*); Citragupta dressed as a Northerner (*udīcyaveśa*) holding a pen and a leaf in his hands on his right and the fierce-looking Kāla (Time, the destroyer) holding a noose in his hand on his left are his characteristic attendants reminding us of the companions of Sūrya, Kuṇḍī or Piṅgala and Daṇḍī. Sculpture No. 39 on the south basement wall of the Paharpur temple has been identified by Dikshit as Yama. The two-armed god stands erect holding a long noose passing over his head with the ends hanging down; a male and a female attendant stand on his either side, perhaps standing for Citragupta and Dhumrorṇā; but his characteristic iconographic traits (staff in his hand and buffalo as his mount) are missing here. Besides, *pāśa* (noose) is almost invariably described in the texts as an emblem of Varuṇa. The Chidambaram figure of Yama illustrated by Rao (*ibid.*, Pl. CLII, Fig. 1) shows the two-armed god standing erect in front of his mount, his right hand holding a noose, the left one resting on a club.

Nirṛti, the lord of the south-west, is a Vedic deity like Yama, Agni and Indra, and is conceived there as a god of evil. The description of Virūpākṣa, the lord of the Rakṣas (Rakṣodhipa), given in chapter 57 of Book III of the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, has been taken by Hemādri as the characterisation of Nirṛti. But Nirṛti is described by the Purāṇakāra in the same context as the wife of Virūpākṣa (*bhāryā ca tasya kartavyā devī Ninṛtitastathā, Ninṛtita*, should be Nirṛti, the metre is corrupt), and Virūpākṣa is of a terrific nature; the author says that Kāla (Time) is Virūpakṣa, and Mṛtyu (death) is Ninṛti or Nirṛti (*Kālo prokto Virūpākṣo Mṛtyurhi Ninṛtistathā*). Sculptures showing Nirṛti are extremely rare, and so the one from Ahobilam illustrated by Rao is very interesting. It shows the Dikpāla riding on the shoulders of a man who seems to be carrying him forward, and he holds a staff in his right hand (*ibid.*, p. 529, Pl. CLIV, Fig. 2). A relief depicting Nirṛti is in the collection of the Rajshahi Museum; the god is shown here riding on the back of a man (*naravāhana*) and holds in his two hands a sword and a shield; it hails from North Bengal (*DHB*, Vol. I, p. 463).

Varuṇa, the lord of the western quarter, holds a *pāśa* and rides a swan (*haṃsārūḍhaśca pāśabhṛd-Varuṇaḥ*; *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, v. 57). He is elaborately described in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, Ch. 52, vv. 1-21) where he is called ' the lord of waters' (*yādasāmpati*). According to it, the slightly pot-bellied god (*kiñcitpralambajaṭhara*) rides a chariot drawn by seven swans, is four-armed (his right hands holding a lotus and a noose, and the left ones, a conch-shell and a jewel-box); his consort Gaurī should sit on his left lap, and Gaṅgā and Yamunā on their respective mounts should be shown on his right and left. Varuṇa and his consort Gaurī are respectively identified with Pradyumna (Kāmadeva) and Rati, and the seven swans drawing his chariot stand for the seven seas of salt, milk, clarified butter, curdled milk, rice-gruel, sugarcane-juice and wine. This elaborate description is not substantiated by actual sculptures which usually show the two-armed god either

standing or seated, not on a swan, but on a Makara. The beautiful figure of standing two-armed Varuṇa illustrated here is a side-piece of the Rajarani temple of Bhuvanesvara. It shows the god standing in a very graceful pose, holding a looped noose by its end in his right hand, the left hand being in the *varadamudrā*; the jewelled head-gear, the ear-ornaments, the necklaces, the waist-girdle, the pearl *yajñopavīta*, etc., are all very tastefully displayed (Pl. XLVI, Fig 1).

Vāyu, the lord of the north-west in the Purāṇic list of Dikpālas, is described as the father of Bhīma, the second Pāṇḍava, and of Hanumān, the monkey-god, respectively in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Ch. 58, vv. 1-6) describes him as two-armed, his two hands holding the two ends of the scarf worn by him, his garment being inflated by wind (*vāyyāpurita-vastra* emphasising his swift motion), his mouth being open and his hair dishevelled (this also indicates his swift movement).[1] This description follows to a great extent the representation of the Zoroastrian wind-god, Vāta (OA △ O) on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka. Rao quotes several other characterisations of Vāyu from such texts as *Aṃśumadbhedāgama, Suprabhedāgama, Śilparatna, Pūrva-kāraṇāgama* and *Rūpamaṇḍana*, all of which, except the last, describe him as two-armed. According to the first of these texts he has a banner in his right hand and a staff in his left, and a ' lion throne ' (*siṃhāsana*); according to the second he holds a banner and an elephant-goad in his hands,

[1] The Venkatesvara Press edition of this text is full of errors, and these have been responsible for strange mistakes in the rendering of passages from its sections on Painting and Image-making by Kramrisch. Thus, ***vyādhitāsya***, in verse 3 of Chapter 58 of Book III is translated by her as ' having a diseased face '. But the word can be easily and correctly emended as ***vyāditāsya*** and translated into English as ' having his mouth open '. Hemādri's extracts from this section of *Viṣṇudharmottara* as they appear in *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, Vol. II, Part I (edited in the Bibliotheca Indica series of the Asiatic Society) are also very corrupt. Rao's extracts about the description of Vāyu from the *Viṣṇudharmottara* contain also strange errors; thus, ***kāṣṭhapūritacakrastu*** (should be emended as *vāyyāpūritavastraśca*) in line 2 has no meaning. Again, there is no doubt that *gṛhītacakrāṅkaḥ* in line four of the extract is to be emended as *gṛhītavastrāntaḥ*.

and has a stag mount; the third lays down that he has a flag in the left (the right hand being in the *varada* pose) and a stag mount; the fourth endows him with an elephant-goad and a stag mount (the emblem in the other hand is not clearly mentioned). The *Rūpamaṇḍana* describes the god ruling over the north-western quarter as four-armed, his four hands showing a *varamudrā*, a banner, a flag and a water-vessel; he rides on an antelope, his colour being green (*Varaṃ dhvajaṃ patākā ca kamaṇḍalukarairdadhat| Mṛgārūḍho haritvarṇaḥ Pavano vāyudikpatiḥ*). In early mediaeval temples of prominent cult gods, Vāyu shown as riding on a stag and holding a flag in his hand occupies his allotted corner in the outer side of the structure.

Much has been said about Kubera, the lord of the northern quarter in Chapter IX of this book. It will be of interest here to note some of his descriptions given in the mediaeval iconographic texts, quoted by Rao. The *Aṃśumadbheda* describes the god as two-armed, the hands being in the *varada* and *abhaya* poses (a club also being shown in the left hand), having a sheep for his mount, attended by his consort and the two Nidhis, *Śaṅkha* and *Padma*, in the form of two powerful spirits (*bhūtākāraṃ mahābalaṃ*). The *Suprabheda* lays stress on the terrific features of the two-armed god holding a club in one of his hands. The *Śilparatna* (or a work associated with it) characterises him as a friend of Hara (Śiva), riding a chariot drawn by men, holding a mace in one of his hands, as pot-bellied and long-armed, accompanied by Aṣṭanidhis and Guhyakas on all sides. The *Pūrvakāraṇa* says that the god rides on a man, is accompanied by the two Nidhis, *Śaṅkha* and *Padma*, and holds a club. The *Rūpamaṇḍana* describes in the first line of one couplet that the god is four-armed, the hands holding a club, a *nidhi*, a citrus and a water-vessel; the last line of this verse is corrupt, for in it he is described both as *gajārūḍhaḥ* (elephant-rider) and *naravāhanaḥ* (riding on a man). The *Viṣṇudharmottara* description of this Dikpāla has already been commented on earlier (*supra*, p. 339), and it has been shown how it

partly reminds us of the Pañcika and Hārīti reliefs of Gandhāra, the *tundila* (pot-bellied) feature of the earlier Yakṣas is emphasised in this and some other texts, and a few other traits like the two fangs in his mouth, his bearded face, Ṛiddhi (the goddess of prosperity) seated on his left lap, etc. are added.

Īśāna, the lord of the north-eastern quarter, is, as his name indicates, a particular aspect of Śiva. The texts endow him generally with such iconographic features as *jaṭāmukuṭa*, *śveta yajñopavīta* (white sacred thread), three eyes, a *śūla* and a *kapāla* in his right and left hands, a bull mount, a tiger-skin garment, etc. All these are the characteristic traits of Śiva. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* description of this Dikpāla is, however, very interesting. In Chapters 55-58 of Book III of this text are described the images of Śiva (Īśāna, called also Gaurīśarva in this context), Agni, Nirṛti and Vāyu, one after another, and it can be presumed that they are no other than the lords of the minor quarters in this juxtaposition (though the text does not expressly define their character in this way). Gaurīśarva (Śarva is one of the eight names of Śiva) standing for Śiva (Īśāna) is nothing but another name of Ardhanārīśvara-Śiva, and the description in the text fully proves it. It will be presently noted in connection with the syncretistic icons, but it is curious that this conjoint aspect of Śiva and Umā should stand for one of the Dikpālas.

Garuḍa

It has already been shown in Chapter X of this book that Garuḍa or Garutmān, the mount of Viṣṇu (in the Sātvata list of the 39 incarnations of the god he appears as Vihaṅgamā and Amṛtaharaṇa, the god's 9th and 18th Avatāras; Amṛtaharaṇa may also stand for Indra, for he stole the nectar from the Nāgas) was originally the Sun conceived as a bird. The Ṛgvedic hymn (I. 164, 46) describes the celestial Garutmān as endowed with beautiful wings (*divyaḥ sa suparṇo Garutmān*). Garuḍa's another

name is Tārkṣya in the epic and Purāṇic literature; the latter name, occurring twice in some late verses of the *Ṛgveda* (I. 89, 6 and X. 178, 1), denotes a horse. In many passages of the Great Epic, Garuḍa is formally identified with the Vedic Garutmān, and is described as the brother of Aruṇa, the forerunner of Sūrya; in the developed mythology of the epic and Purāṇic period, he is the son of the sage Kaśyapa and Vinatā (one of his names is Vainateya), and is thus the half-brother of the Nāgas, sons of Kaśyapa by his other wife. Garuḍa's enmity with the Nāgas is proverbial (he is called *bhujagāri*, *pannagāśana*, *pannagabhojana*, etc.), and the texts ascribe it to the ill-treatment of his mother by her co-wife and stepsons. The *Mahābhārata* (Ādiparva, Chs. 43-50) narrates the story of the stealing of Amṛta or the nectar (Amṛtaharaṇa) by Garuḍa who undertook this task for the Nāgas in order that they would release Vinatā from Kadru's bondage. While on his way to secure the nectar for his half-brothers, he lifted up an elephant named Supratīka and a tortoise called Vibhāvasu with his talons from the lake Ālamba. He later ate up his two prizes, and proceeding to Indra's capital vanquished the divine guards of the nectar and flew with it to the Nāgas. Vinatā was set free as stipulated, but the Nāgas were deprived of Amṛta which was stolen by the crafty Indra in disguise. The tongues of the Nāgas were cleft asunder, and remained so ever afterwards, because they licked up the sharp-edged *kuśa* grass on which the pot of ambrosia was placed by Garuḍa; this is also the reason why the *kuśa* grass is so sacred to the Hindus (for various other epic stories about the Sun-bird, refer to Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, pp. 21ff.).

It will be of interest now to study the development of the Garuḍa motif in early Indian art, before its iconographic descriptions in the mediaeval texts are noted, and some mediaeval Garuḍa images are described. In the earliest period he is represented as a huge parrot-like bird with emphasis on some of his physical features. One such extant figure of Garuḍa is carved on the inner side of the middle

architrave of the eastern gateway of Sanchi. The entire relief composition here shows the animal world paying homage to Buddha symbolised by the Bodhidruma with Vajrāsana beneath it. In contains, along with animal figures in their natural form, such hybrid figures as lions with the heads of a dog or a bird (griffin). In its right corner is carved a big parrot-like bird with ear-rings and a bushy tuft by the side of a five-headed snake. Grünwedel correctly recognised in these two motifs, Garuḍa and Nāga, and remarked, 'The native parrot type on the one hand and the west Asian griffin on the other, are the bases upon which modern iconography developed its Garuḍa.'[1] In the Hellenistic art of Gandhāra, Garuḍa appears as a huge eagle decked with the same ear-ornaments, but the wings are treated more naturalistically. He is often depicted as carrying up to the sky a Nāga and a Nāginī either with his long beak, or his big talons. Early Buddhist texts contain stories which are connected with this exploit of Garuḍa (*cf.* the Bauddha drama of *Nāgānanda* ascribed to king Śrī Harṣa).[2] The intermediate stage in the evolution of the hybrid Garuḍa figure of mediaeval Indian art from these early forms can be traced with the help of Gupta coins. On most of the gold coins of the imperial Guptas, Garuḍa invariably appears in the form of a plump bird with beautiful wings, as the capital piece of a column (Garuḍadhvaja). Vincent Smith suggested that the Garuḍa of the standard was copied from the Roman eagle; but Allan has rightly observed that there is no reason for this suggestion, and 'the resemblance is quite a coincidence, and Garuḍadhvajas

[1] *Buddhist Art*, p. 51. Grünwedel considers the Sanchi motif as a purely Indian one, but observes at the same time that the wings here 'show the artificial forms of west-Asian art'.

[2] Grünwedel thinks that such Hellenistic compositions of Gandhāra as Garuḍa lifting up Nāga youths were direct copies 'with Buddhist import' of the 'Rape of Ganymede', a famous work of the Hellenistic sculptor Leochares; *Ibid.*, pp. 109-10, Figs. 61, 62. The epic mythology about Garuḍa's taking off Supratīka and Vibhāvasu, already noted, may have some connection with these Gandhāra reliefs; it is significant that the myth occurs in the Ādiparva, and it may be an interpolation.

were common objects in India."[1] On the reverse side of Chandragupta II's silver coins Garuḍa stands facing with outspread wings as a full-fledged bird, but on some varieties of his copper coins, he is endowed with novel features. Thus on the *Chatra type* (Type No. II) of this Gupta king's copper issues, he is shown with outspread wings and long human arms adorned with bracelets; on Types V, VI and VII of the same issues, he is figured with outstretched wings, though without human arms, holding a snake in his mouth (*cf.* his epithet *pannagāśana*).[2] The hybridity in the representation of Garuḍa marked by Type No. II (copper coins) noted above was not emphasised in the other silver and copper coins of this Gupta monarch and his successors, and it was left for the regular iconographers of Brahmanical art to develop the type in the late Gupta and the mediaeval periods. An inscribed terracotta seal of Kumāragupta I found at Nalanda and now in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, emphasises in a very striking manner the hybridity of the motif. The plump bird stands facing on a sort of pedestal, but it has the face of a man (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 1).

Textual descriptions of the developed motif may now be noted. The *Śrītatvanidhi* and *Śilparatna*, as quoted by Rao, describe a two-armed image of Garuḍa; but the latter text also refers to another variety of Garutmān which is endowed with eight arms, the hands holding such objects as a water-vessel, a mace, a conchshell, a discus, a sword and a snake, the feet of his rider Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa resting on the two front hands; the two-armed image of Garuḍa is designated as Tārkṣya in the *Śilparatna*. The *Agnipurāṇa* (Ch. 49, vv. 19-21) describes the images of Trailokyamohana and Tārkṣya as eight-armed, with *cakra, khaḍga, muṣala* and *aṅkuśa* in the right hands, and *śaṅkha, śārṅga, gadā* and *pāśa* in the left; Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī holding *padma*

[1] J. Allan, *op. cit.*, Introduction, p. LXX.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 52 ff. and plates. On type I of the copper coins of Chandragupta II, Garuḍa is nimbate, and on Type V, he is placed on an altar; all these features imply his divine character.

and *viṇā* respectively are to be placed on either side of this type of image. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* enjoins that Tārkṣya should have a nose like the beak of a bird, four arms, a face with round eyes, the breast, knee and legs like those of a vulture, and two wings; his back hands should hold an umbrella and a jar full (of nectar), and his front hands should be in the *añjali* pose. When lord Viṣṇu is riding on him, the back hands of Garuḍa (or Tārkṣya, as he is named here) instead of holding an umbrella and an ambrosia-pot support the legs of his master; he should be shown slightly pot-bellied (*kiñcillambodara*) and should be decorated with all ornaments (Book III, Ch. 54, vv. 1-9). It is curious that it is only according to the *Śilparatna* description of the eight-armed variety of Garuḍa that he holds a snake in one of his hands; the *Śrītatvanidhi*, however, tells us that his head should be adorned with snakes (*mūrdhnā ca phaṇimaṇḍitaḥ*), and one of his epithets according to the lexicons is *phaṇiphaṇabhṛt* (' holder of the hood of a snake '). The association of Garuḍa with snakes is emphasised in the epic and Purāṇic myths, and is also illustrated in his earlier and mediaeval representations.

The extant images of Garuḍa of the mediaeval period can be broadly divided into two classes,—one that shows him as Viṣṇu's mount, and the other where the bird-man serves as the capital of a column, or is placed in front of a Vaiṣṇava shrine. In both, the mount and emblem of Viṣṇu is depicted as a round-eyed human being with the wings of a bird and a beak-like nose, and sometimes legs with the claws of a bird; he is usually two-armed, his hands being in the *añjali* pose. On some late mediaeval sculptures of Eastern India, he is endowed with four arms, the back hands supporting the legs of his lord or those of the divine couple, Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa. As the capital of a column he is sometimes depicted as Janiform, the whole figure (not face alone) being double-sided and facing opposite ways. Such figures are two-armed with the hands in the *namaskāra mudrā*, the eyes and beak as in the other type described above, usual ornaments, elaborate wings,

the legs endowed with the claws of a bird, the hair arranged in single coils standing on end on the head. Such a Garuḍa capital in the collection of the Indian Museum is illustrated here; it is in hornblende schist, and is a mediaeval sculpture of Eastern India (Pl. XXVI, Fig. 3). In the elaborate sculpture depicting Viṣṇu Yogāsana in the collection of the Mathura Museum (D. 37) Garuḍa is shown as a standing human being with just a suggestion of tiny wings behind his back, holding a small snake in his hand (*cf* his epithet *phaṇiphaṇabhṛt* already noted). Vogel could not correctly identify the figure in his description of the relief (*M.M.C.*, p. 102), but there is no doubt that it is a graceful representation of Garuḍa of the early mediaeval period with the least element of hybridity in it. The two images of Garuḍa illustrated by Rao (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 287, Pls. LXXXIV and LXXXV, Fig. 1) are interesting; the first of the two, carved on the front gable of Cave No. III at Badami, shows the mythical bird-man with a flabby belly (*cf.* the textual description *kiñcillambodara*) holding in his right hand a big snake and flying in the air. The other image from Palur, Travancore, is a 17th century wooden sculpture, a sort of a ceiling piece used to be hung by means of a chain. It illustrates the mythology of the forcible abduction of Vibhāvasu and Supratīka (the elephant and the tortoise) by Garuḍa, already commented on, for it holds the two in his hands. Two elaborately carved panels in Cave No. IV at Badami represent the theft of the jar of ambrosia by Garuḍa, the episode being elaborately described in the Āstikaparvādhyāya of the Ādiparva of the *Mahābhārata*.[1]

Nandin

Nandin, Nandīśvara or Adhikāranandin are some of the various names by which Śiva's mount, the 'bull',

[1] These panels have been fully described by R. D. Banerjee in *M.A.S.I.*, No. 25 (*Basreliefs of Badami*, p. 46, Pl. XXIII, Figs. (*a*) and (*b*); in pages 43-6, he narrates the whole story.

came to be described in epic and Purāṇic texts. When these designations began to be attributed to him, he was conceived more as one of Śiva's attendants than as his mount, and unlike Garuḍa he was usually fully anthropomorphised though hybridity in his representation was not unknown. It has been suggested, in Chapter IV of this book, how the bull was originally the theriomorphic form of Śiva, and how numismatic and literary data appear to support this suggestion (pp. 112, 129). *Vṛṣabha* was at first the attributive epithet of several of the Vedic divinities including Rudra, but it came to denote Śiva specifically in the post-Vedic age. The idea about the bull being the mount of the god appears to have originated before the first century B.C. or first century A.D.; the coins of Ujjayinī and those of Wema Kadphises, noticed in Chapter IV, prove it (p. 117, Pl. IX, Fig. 14). The process of anthropomorphising the mount began, however, in the early centuries of the Christian era, and that it was an accomplished fact by the Gupta period can be substantiated by Kālidāsa's description of Nandin already noted (*supra*, p. 261). He is described there as keeping guard over the entrance-door to Śiva's abode at Kailāsa with a golden staff resting against his left fore-arm, and silencing the Gaṇas with a finger of his right hand placed on his mouth (*Kumārasambhava*, III, 41). A reference to Nandin in the lesser epic is of interest, for it describes him as having the general appearance of a monkey (*vānararūpam*), but the body of a fierce dark brown short-armed powerful dwarf.[1] This description is evidently based on the concept about him as one of the leaders of the Śivagaṇas who, as has been previously shown, are endowed with faces of various animals in early Indian texts and art.

[1] *Rāmāyaṇa*, VIII. 16, 14. Nandī is described in this Sarga (v. 8) as, ...*karāla kṛṣṇapiṅgalaḥ | Vāmano vikaṭo muṇḍī Nandī hrasvabhujo balī*. In verse 16 he is called *vānararūpa*; Rāvaṇa, not allowed by Nandī to proceed to Śiva's abode in Kailāsa, laughs at him, and is cursed in turn by the trident-bearing Nandī, the second Śaṃkara (*Dīptaṃ śūlamavaṣṭabhya dvitīyamiva Śaṃkaraḥ*).

Plastic representations of the bull-faced Nandin of the early mediaeval period are not unknown.

Rao cites three different accounts about the origin of Adhikārānandin from *Śiva-mahāpurāṇa*, *Liṅgapurāṇa* and another unnamed text (*op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 455-58). No reference is to be found there to his peculiar ungainly appearance, and he is primarily described as a human being having some iconographic traits of Śiva. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, Ch. 73, vv. 15-7) describes Nandin as three-eyed, four-armed, wearing a tiger-skin garment, holding a *triśūla* and a *bhindipāla* (a kind of javelin) in two of his hands, one of the (front) hands being placed on his head, the other being in the *tarjjanīmudrā*. Another unnamed south-Indian text quoted by Rao characterises him as holding a battle-axe and an antelope (in his back hands), (his front hands) being in the *añjalimudrā* in the act of bowing to Lord Śiva, his body being besmeared with ashes (this is the Pāśupata practice), (his head) being brightened by crescent moon, Gaṅgā and snail-shell-like *jaṭās* (*Vibhrāṇaṃ paraśuṃ mṛgaṃ karatale Īśapranāmāñjaliṃ bhasmoddhūlitapāṇḍuraṃ śaśi-kalā-Gaṅgākaparddojvalam*). The male figure usually placed into the entrance-door of many Śiva temples of Southern India corresponds to the second description, and thus, as has been observed by Rao, resembles to some extent Śiva in his Candraśekharamūrti aspect; the difference lies in this that the front hands of the former are folded in obeisance, while those of the latter are in the *varada* and the *abhaya* poses. Rao rightly observes that ' the figure of Adhikārānandin is sometimes mistaken by the less informed persons for that of Śiva (*ibid.*, p. 455). But Nandin's fully theriomorphic (bull) form was never discarded by the devout Śaivas, for every Śaiva shrine in India must have the figure of a bull squatting on a raised pedestal facing the entrance-door of the shrine, inside the main sanctum of which is almost invariably placed the divine emblem, the Śivaliṅga. This explains the *Matsyapurāṇa* description of Nandin as *devarīkṣaṇatatparaḥ*, *i.e.*, ' engaged in looking at the Deva (Śiva) '

Āyudhapuruṣas

The phenomenal development of the practice of making images and worshipping them is interestingly indicated by the fact that even the attributes or weapons meant to be placed in the hands of the deities were personified and represented anthropomorphically. Such representations came to be designated generally as the Āyudhapuruṣas, and it is worthy of note that this feature was mostly associated with the icons of Viṣṇu. *Cakra* and *gadā* in human form are found as early as the Gupta period; *śaṅkha* and rarely *padma* are also anthropomorphised in the Viṣṇuite reliefs of the early and late mediaeval periods of Eastern and Northern India. Various other emblems, such as *vajra*, *śakti*, *daṇḍa*, *khaḍga*, *pāśa*, *aṅkuśa*, *triśūla*, etc., are also personified in late iconographic texts, but they are seldom shown in human form. The earliest representation of an Āyudhapuruṣa, however, seems to go back to the Indo-Scythic period. *Vajra* appears on some copper coins of Maues as a man behind whom is carved a double-pronged thunderbolt, just in front of Zeus-Indra whose right hand is placed over his head. Gardner describes this device as, ' Zeus laureate, seated to left, on throne; holds in left hand sceptre; right extended towards small winged female figure, who seems to be an embodiment of the thunderbolt ' (*B.M.C.*, p. 70, Pl. XVI. 9). In the introduction to his *Catalogue* (p. vii), the same author emphasises on this ' impersonation of the thunderbolt '. But it is a fact that such a personification of *vajra* has not been found in later reliefs. Of the different Vaiṣṇava emblems usually represented in art, some are depicted as male and others as female, their gender being determined by that of the respective word denoting them. Thus, the word *gadā* being in feminine gender, its personified form is shown as a beautiful woman, *śaṅkha* being masculine, it is represented as a male figure. *Cakra* and *padma* are in the neuter gender, and the texts enjoin that they should be shown as eunuchs, but for all practical purposes they appear as male figures in late Gupta and

mediaeval art. The texts also emphasise that weapons like *śakti, aṅkuśa, pāśa, vajra,* etc., should be personified on the basis of the above criterion; but there is hardly any means of testing this textual injunction as they are seldom represented in human form. Rao recognised in some of the accessory figures, shown in the Śeṣaśayana relief at Deogarh, the Āyudhapuruṣas, Dhanuṣ, Cakra, Śaṅkha, Gadā and Khaḍga; the first and the fourth stand by the side of the central figure, the last three standing below in fighting attitude in front of the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha. The character of some of the accessory figures as Āyudhapuruṣas standing by the composite deity is usually determined by the showing of their real forms (a wheel, a mace, a conch-shell, etc.) either behind or on the head of the personifications; particular weapons or attributes are also sometimes placed in their hands. The mere presence of such emblems in the hands of the attendants of Vāsudeva Viṣṇu, however, would not always mean that they are Āyudhapuruṣas. Thus, in the Madhyama Bhogasanamūrti of Viṣṇu in the Kailāsanāthasvāmin temple at Conjeevaram (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 105, Pl. XXVI), the god does not hold any of the attributes in his four hands; but a conch-shell and a discus are carried by two small attendants who also hold a yak-tail in their other hands. These two figures have been wrongly described by Rao as Āyudhapuruṣas; but as they are female figures, and as Cakra- and Śaṅkha-puruṣas are never shown thus, they are really the female companions of the god carrying for him two of his principal attributes. The Viṣṇu-*cakra*, found at Sharishadaha (Twenty-four Perganas, Bengal) and now in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, is a unique sculpture carved on both sides with the same device. It depicts a four-armed figure dancing on the shoulders of Garuḍa in the centre of a finely carved wheel; his front hands are beating time over his head (or shown in one form of obeisance, *namaskāra*), the back hands holding a *cakra* and a *gadā*. Garuḍa and these two emblems prove that the figure inside the wheel is no other than the Cakrapuruṣa

who is partly endowed with the character of Viṣṇu (*cf.* human representations of Adhikāranandin already discussed). This is evidently Sudarśana, the *cakra par excellence* of Viṣṇu (Pl. XXVI, Fig. 4). Sudarśana-cakra is described in the *Śilparatna* and other texts either as an eight- or sixteen-armed Viṣṇu placed inside a *Ṣaṭkoṇacakra* (two interlacing equilateral triangles in the midst of a rayed disc.) The Bengal sculpture is a new variety of Sudarśana, and was either set up as a main image in a subsidiary shrine in a Vaiṣṇava temple, or it served as the capital piece of a column, like the Janiform Garuḍa on the top of a Garuḍadhvaja noticed above. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* description of Cakrapuruṣa is different. It appears there as ' a male figure with round eyes and a drooping belly; it is to carry a *cauri*, and is to be adorned with various ornaments. It is also to be carved in such a manner as to indicate that it is showing a desire to gaze upon Viṣṇu; the left hand of the god should be made to rest upon the head of Cakrapuruṣa ' (Bk. III, Ch. 85, vv. 13-4).

Syncretistic Icons

It has been shown briefly in Chapter I of this book how extant images belonging to various cults illustrate a feeling of rivalry and jealousy among their respective followers. One or two groups of such images have also been noticed in some of the chapters dealing with the cult icons, which belong to this category. Many are such Brahmanical Hindu images which emphasise this sectarian ill-feeling, and many are also the Vajrayāna Buddhist icons of the mediaeval period, which are blatant examples of morbid sectarianism. One among the numerous forms of Avalokiteśvara or Lokeśvara in the Vajrayāna pantheon is known by the curious name of Hari-Hari-Hari-vāhanodbhava Lokeśvara; it depicts Padmapāṇi-Avalokiteśvara, the spiritual son of the Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha, riding on the shoulders of Viṣṇu (Hari) who has Garuḍa (Hari) as his mount, the divine bird-man again being mounted on the back of a lion (Hari). Advantage was thus taken of some of the various synonyms of the word *hari* by the sectarian iconographer in order to formulate such a type of icon in which the principal object of worship of the followers of one of the major Hindu cults was shown as a mere mount of a Buddhist divinity.

This is, however, only one side of the picture. Attempts at reconciliation and rapprochement between the rival creeds were being made even from a very early period, when some of them had not come into being, and others that had originated were being systematised. The sentiment so beautifully expressed in the famous couplet of the Dīrghatamas hymn (*R.V.*, I, 164, 46) long before the evolution of these cults never lost its force in subsequent times, and it must have exercised its deep influence on many of the exclusive worshippers of subsequent times. The Ṛgvedic Ṛṣi rightly emphasised that the sages call the one eternally existing principle (in this context the Sun god) in various ways (*ekaṃ sat viprā bahudhā vadanti*), and the names denoting this principle may be different, such as Indra, Agni, the celestial sun-bird Garutmān, Yama, Mātariśvā, etc. Many of the intellectuals among the followers of different cults, especially those with a liberal bent of mind, knew that the respective gods of their choice were but different aspects or names of the one absolute god who, by himself, was beyond the ken of speech and thought (*avāṅmanasagocarah*). The spread of Vedāntic teachings among the worshippers of the various creeds was also not a little responsible for the growth of a liberal religious outlook.

The general trend of the guidance given in the Smṛti-śāstras for the proper control and regulation of the lives of the sectarian Indians was also an important factor in encouraging this feeling among the different groups of these worshippers or upāsakas. Approved Smṛti works like some of the Dharmaśāstras of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian periods, and the *Manu-* and *Yājñavalkya-Smṛtis* did not advocate the cause of any cult in particular. Ideas inculcated in some epic passages like those in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (VIII. 21 ; IX. 23, etc.), though extolling the greatness of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, in a way helped the growth of this mentality among the sectaries. Thus was developed among numerous persons belonging to different sects, who also followed the injunctions laid down in the authoritative Smṛti works, a liberal attitude towards matters of religious faith. Many of these persons of higher order, usually belonging to the order of Brahmans known as Smārtas, evolved a kind of worship described as *Pañcāyatana pūjā* in which the principal deities of the five approved Brahmanical Hindu cults were the objects of veneration. The principal object of worship in it was usually in the form of an aniconic emblem which symbolised all the five cult deities. It will not be possible to fix definitely the period when this custom came into vogue among the Smārtas, but clear archaeological evidence will be produced here, which will show that syncretistic tendencies were at work from a fairly early date. But before this is done, it will be useful to mention briefly the characterisation of the *Pañcāyatana pūjā* as given by a distinguished and keenly observant Western scholar and Sanskritist of the nineteenth

century. Monier Williams describes the ceremony as he saw it being practised by some of the Hindus of Central and Southern India in this manner: 'Five stones or symbols believed to be permeated by the essences of the five chief deities are, (1) the black stone, representing Viṣṇu; (2) the white stone representing Śiva's essence; (3) the red stone, representing Gaṇeśa; (4) the small piece of metallic ore, representing the wife of Śiva; (5) the piece of crystal representing the sun . . . . . All five symbols are placed on a round open metal dish, called *Pañcāyatana*, and are arranged in five different methods, according to the preference given to any one of the five deities at the time of worship' (*Religious Thought and Life in India*, pp. 411-12). It should be noted that the particular mode of placing in the centre the symbol of any one of the five cult deities in the *Pañcāyatana* arrangement (thus giving special importance to him or her) may indicate the cult affiliation of the Smārta worshipper. Thus, the tolerant mentality of these Smārtas did not stand in their way of associating themselves to one or other of these cults. The *Pañcāyatana pūjā* of the Smārtas is also illustrated by many extant early and late mediaeval temples of India, in which the central shrine housing the principal deity is surrounded by four smaller shrines on the four corners of the quadrangle containing the figures of the four other deities.

Another important contributory factor to the growth of cult-syncretism was the mental attitude of the early foreign immigrants into India, the Śakas, the Pahlavas, the Kushāṇas and the Hūṇas. They were presumably less cultured than the Indians, and were very prone to be influenced by the latter, especially in matters of religion. But from the beginning they showed a proneness to pay equal homage to gods and goddesses of more than one creed. This eclectic tendency among them is very interestingly illustrated by the extant coins of these early alien rulers of India. The kings often used as devices on their coins the figures of deities belonging to different pantheons, and it can be presumed that they had some feelings of respect and

veneration for at least some of the originals of these devices. At first most of the deities were recruited from the Greek pantheon, and this was natural, for the Śaka-Pahlavas succeeded the Greeks in the sovereignty over parts of Northern and North-Western India, and imitated many of their coin devices. P. Gardner, while commenting on the devices appearing on the coins of these alien kings, observes, 'When we reach the issues of king Maues, we find a wealth of most remarkable and original barbaro-Hellenic figures, a figure resembling Tyche, holding in one hand a *patera*, in the other a wheel, who seems to be the original of the still more outlandish figure of Azes's coins.'[1] Another instance of syncretism is to be found on a coin-device of Azilises, successor of Azes. Whitehead, while describing it in the *Punjab Museum Catalogue* (Vol. I, p. 136, Pl. XIII, Fig. 336), draws our attention to the syncretic panoply of the deity and characterises it as 'a decidedly pantheistic type'. The syncretism at first lay no doubt in the fusion of Hellenic and non-Hellenic elements (*cf.* the use of the word 'barbaro-Hellenic' by Gardner in the extract quoted above). A great part of the latter was undoubtedly Indian, though it is very difficult to sort it out. But from the time of the Indo-Parthian king Gondophares, in some of whose coins the Indian deity Śiva has been recognised (in Chapter IV it has been conclusively shown by the present writer that Śiva appears for the first time on some square copper coins of Maues), the Indian element came to predominate by stages. It has also been shown in Chapter IV that the great Kushan king Wema Kadphises was a votary of Śiva, for it was this god and his emblems, the bull and the trident-battleaxe, that were invariably present on his coins (in his Prākṛt coin-legends he is almost always described as *Mahiśvara*, i.e., Māheśvara, an exclusive worshipper of Śiva). His successors, Kanishka and Huvishka, introduced the somewhat novel feature of the extremely 'varied reverse devices' on their coins, the deities there being recruited from such widely

[1] P. Gardner, *B.M.C.*, Introduction, p. lviii.

divergent religious pantheon as Zoroastrian, Brahmanical Hindu, Buddhist, and rarely Greek. Kanishka's affiliation with Buddhism is sufficiently established by Chinese literary data, but in this sort of medley of the devices on his coins, many scholars recognised his eclecticism in religious matters. But it can be proved with the help of some of the little known coins of Huvishka, that he paid his homage to more than one deity. Cunningham reproduced some copper coins of this king in his *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans* (Pl. XXII, Figs. 21-2), on one side of which he is shown standing in a suppliant attitude either before Nana or Umā (on a few of his coins Śiva is once shown accompanied by Nana and at other time by Umā). It is in one of the coins of this very king that the first attempt at cult syncretism may be clearly recognised, and the device may be the earliest representation of the composite cult-god Hari-Hara (cf. *supra*, pp. 123-24). The device on the seal of the Hephtalite Huṇa chief has already been noticed and commented on by the present writer; it stands for a syncretistic deity, combining in it Viṣṇu, Śiva and Mihira, two of the constituents being Hindu, the third Zoroastrian by name, but very probably Indian in the present set-up (*cf.* pp. 124-25, Pl. XI, Fig. 2). Reference has already been made in Chapter XI to the introduction of the East Iranian Sun cult into India at a fairly early period, and here is a syncretistic figure containing in it the Indianised adaptation of the Iranian Mithra or Mihira. The period to which this intaglio belongs marks an age during which the three cults of Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Saura had developed to a great extent. Side by side with the growth of the separatist tendencies evidenced by their formation and systematisation, a substratum of rapprochement and reconciliation was present.

Such a syncretistic tendency is very interestingly illustrated by a fairly large number of mediaeval sculptures, one or two of which have already been noticed in Chapter I of this book. The latter may again be mentioned and described, and many more of this nature may be utilised here for the purpose of emphasising this trait of Indian mind in

matters of religion. The *Pañcāyatana pūjā* of the Smārtas has just been mentioned, and its emblem used in more modern times, described. But a *Pañcāyatana* Śivaliṅga, originally found in a part of Bihar and now in the collection of the Indian Museum, which is being illustrated here, characterises in a very interesting manner the religious belief of a mediaeval Śaiva of Eastern India belonging to the order of the Smārtas. It is inaccurately described in the Museum records as a Caturmukha Śivaliṅga, but it really shows the four cult deities, Gaṇapati, Viṣṇu, Pārvatī and Sūrya on the four sides of the central Śaiva emblem, all of which taken together symbolise the five Brahmanical Hindu cults (Pl. XLVI, Fig. 2; only Gaṇapati and Viṣṇu are shown in the reproduction). Several such sculptures are known to me, a comparison of which with many miniature shrines of the mediaeval period lying derelict in the river bank at Banaras will be fruitful. These tapering shrines of about 3′ or 3½′ in height show niches on four sides, inside which are carved Umā-Maheśvara (Umā seated on the left lap of Śiva), Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Gaṇapati. These may also be called another mode of symbolising the *Pañcāyatana* worship of the Smārtas. A very interesting stone plaque hailing from Kaveripakkam (Southern India) to which my attention was drawn by my friend, C. Sivaramamurti of the Archaeological Department of India, may be described and illustrated in this connection. It is of oblong size and it contains the somewhat indifferently carved figures of such Brahmanical Hindu divinities as Gaṇapati, Brahmā, Narasiṃha, Śivaliṅga (?), Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī (?), Umā-Maheśvara with Nandī below, the Śrīvatsa-Śrī symbol and Durgā-Mahiṣamardinī. The sun appears to be absent in this medley of divinities, and thus this plaque cannot be described as the cult-emblem of a Smārta practising *Pañcāyatana pūjā*. But there can be no doubt that whosoever might have used it for his cult rituals in mediaeval times was actuated by a spirit of liberalism in which many of the cult deities and some of their aspects (*cf.* the Narasiṃha aspect of Viṣṇu and the Mahiṣamardinī aspect of Durgā) along with even Brahmā were simultaneously his objects of worship (Pl. XLVII, Fig. 1).

It will be of interest now to notice some of the mediaeval sculptures which in a very characteristic manner illustrate the fusion of, or rapprochement between, two, three or even four rival cults. The Hari-Haramūrti (or Haryardha aspect of Śiva to a Śaiva) emphasises the reconciliation between the two major cults of Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism. One of the earliest stone reliefs representing this composite divinity is to be found at Badami, and is illustrated here (Pl. XLVI, Fig. 3). The four-armed god stands erect facing front, his back right and left hands holding a battle-axe with a snake entwined round it and a conch-shell (the respective emblems of Śiva and Viṣṇu), his front right hand is broken, the front left being in the *kaṭihasta* pose. The clear line of demarcation between the left (Hari) and the right (Hara) halves is emphasised by the treatment of the crown (the right part of it shows a *jaṭāmukuṭa*, while the left part a *kirītamukuṭa*), the two different ear-rings (a *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in the right ear, and a *nakra-* or *makara-kuṇḍala* in the left ear), the already noted emblems in the back hands, and the presence of the bull-faced Nandī and Pārvatī on the right, and that of the slightly pot-bellied dwarfish Garuḍa and gracefully standing Lakṣmī on the left. On the lower section of the panel are to be seen the dwarfish figures of the Śivagaṇas, some dancing and others playing on musical instruments. A mediaeval sculpture from Bihar (now in the collection of the Indian Museum) does not contain all these elaborate features, but the right and left parts of the combined image stand for Hara and Hari, and the Hara aspect is emphasised by the *ūrdhaliṅga* sign not always present in such images. In such composite icons, the left side is invariably assigned to Hari or Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu was Mohinī, the beautiful female form assumed by him while distributing nectar churned out of the ocean by the Devas and the Asuras to deprive the latter of their share of it by bewitching them with her beauty; Śiva fell in love with this aspect of Viṣṇu. Another very interesting composite sculpture from Bihar (now an exhibit in the Gupta Gallery of the Archaeological Section of the Indian Museum) shows the four-armed Hari-Hara in the centre, the back hands

carrying a trident and a conch-shell, and the front hands a skull-cup (?) and a discus; he bears the other usual features, and there are some attendants by his side. But what is unique in this sculpture is the presence of standing Buddha and Sūrya in the right and left sides of Hari-Hara. The halos round the heads of Buddha and Sūrya (the former stands on a double-petalled lotus and the latter on his seven-horsed chariot driven by Aruṇa) and the separate sections of the pedestal allotted to them prove that they are no mere attendants here, but are really cult objects for worship. Thus, this unique sculpture demonstrates in a striking manner not only the combination of Hindu deities of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Sūrya, but also that of Buddha with them (PL. XLVIII, Fig. 1). The direct association of the Bodhisattva Lokeśvara (Padmapāṇi, Avalokiteśvara) with Brahmanical Hindu cult deities is further emphasised by two unique sculptures in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta, both hailing from Eastern India. The beautifully carved brass figure of Śiva-Lokeśvara shows the composite two-armed ithyphallic god standing in the *samapādasthānaka* pose, on a double-petalled lotus, his right hand holding a *kapāla* and the left a *triśūla*; he is very sparsely ornamented, bears the tiny seated figure of the Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha on the top of his *jaṭāmukuṭa*, and has two standing male figures on his either side. The *śiraścakra* with superposed ' umbrellas ', the gracefully carved oblong *prabhā* with stylised swans dancing on the transom ends, the small figures of the donors and an unidentifiable miniature figure on the top left corner of the *prabhā*, the plain and simple *triratha* pedestal, and the delicate carving of the main figure and its two attendants endow the whole sculpture with a quality and character not usually met with in such hieratic sculptures. The sculpture hails from Barisal (East Bengal) and is a striking object of art of the early mediaeval period (PL. XLVI, Fig. 4). A fragmentary relief from Eastern India (only the head and upper part of the torso with multiple arms, some intact, others broken, are preserved), probably from Orissa, now in the collection of the Asutosh Museum,

shows also in an interesting manner the combined representation of Sūrya and Lokeśvara. The composite god appears to have been ten-armed, six of whose hands are gone; of the remaining four hands, two right hold a noose (?) and a full-blossomed lotus flower by its stalk, the two left holding a similar full-blown lotus by its stalk and another indistinct object. The tiny figure of the Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha seated on the top of the raised coils of *jaṭāmukuṭa* indicates the Lokeśvara character of the god, while the full-blown lotuses held by his two parallel hands on either side in a manner in which they are shown in the hands of a North-Indian Sun-icon emphasise his solar nature; the lower portion of the god being gone, we cannot be sure whether there were boots in his legs or seven horses being driven by Aruṇa carved on the pedestal, and such other characteristics of a north-Indian Sūrya figure. The sculpture with its pointed torus-*prabhāvalī* can be dated in the late eleventh century or early twelfth century A.D. (Pl. XLVIII, Fig. 3).

Before some notice is taken of the other extant composite Hindu icons in which Mahāyāna Buddhist influence is clearly discernible, it will be useful to discuss the iconographic features of some syncretistic images where the constituent elements are all Brahmanical Hindu in character. Features of the Sun god are traceable in the representations of many of the cult deities. This is naïvely explained by the myth-maker by saying that from the 'parings' of the resplendent body of the Sun (the effulgent body of the god had to be trimmed by his father-in-law Viśvakarmā in order that his daughter Saṃjñā, the principal consort of Sūrya, could bear her husband's company) many characteristic traits by way of weapons, attributes, etc. were made for the other Brahmanical Hindu deities. The *Gāyatrī mantra* itself is conceived by orthodox Brahmans as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, in the morning, midday and evening respectively, each of which deity shines resplendent within the flaming solar orb. The close connection of Sūrya with Viṣṇu, or Viṣṇu as Nārāyaṇa, has already been commented on in Chapter X of this book. Images of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa hailing from

different parts of India are well known. But the composite icons combining in them the features of Sūrya and Śiva are comparatively few. One such can be recognised in the description by Hiralal of a six-armed composite image found by him at Madhia in the old Panna State in Bundelkhand region. The figure holds in two of its left hands a *triśūla*, a *padma*, the third hand being in the *varada* pose; one of the right hands is broken, the other two holding a lotus and a *mṛgāṅka* (a deer symbol). Its legs are clad in shoes, and it is likely that the seven horses with their driver are present below (though this is not found in Hiralal's description). The boots on the legs and the two lotuses in the hands are unmistakable solar features, while the trident and deer symbols indicate the Śiva part of it. Bull carved in the left corner (evidently of the pedestal) and Garuḍa in the right corner may further emphasise that it combines in it along with Śiva element, the element of Viṣṇu. This figure is carved in the centre of the door (lintel) of a ruined temple, figures of various other deities of the Hindu pantheon being carved in the other sections of the door; the central position assigned to it proves that the temple was originally dedicated to the worship of the composite god.[1] But a very unique syncretistic image in which Sūrya and Śiva are the constituents is in the collection of the V. R. S. Museum, Rajshahi, which has been tentatively identified as Mārttaṇḍa-Bhairava' by K. C. Sarkar. It is a three-faced and ten-armed image of the 12th century A.D., found at Manda (Rajshahi), containing the usual accessories noticeable in a well-developed type of Sūrya figure of this part of India. Its central face is placid, the side ones being fierce; its front two pairs of hands are broken, but the full-blown lotuses in one pair are visible; the back hands, which are preserved, carry, from the right side onwards, a *khaṭvāṅga*, a *triśūla*, a *śakti*,

[1] Hiralal's description of this image as well as other images of a somewhat similar character found in the Bundelkhand region is evidently wrong. He refers to all of them as Trimūrtis, the constituent elements being described by him as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. But they are really the combined forms of Sūrya, Śiva and Viṣṇu, the Brahmā element being not shown there; for his article, *cf. I.A.*, 1918, p. 137.

a *nīlotpala*, a *ḍamaru*, and a *sarpa*, flames issuing from its heads and shoulders (the Śivaite character of most of these emblems should be noted). The *dhyāna-mantra* of a particular variety of Sun (Mārttaṇḍa) appearing in the *Sāradātilakatantra* conforms to a great extent to its iconographic features, and the text says that such a variety of the Sun god is ' half ' (a part) of Śiva (*Ballabhārddha*).[1] A composite representation of Brahmā and Sūrya can be recognised in the beautiful image of the 11th century A.D. acquired from Mahendra (Dinajpur, Bengal) and now in the collection of the V. R. S. Museum. It is similar in many respects to the usual two-armed Sūrya figures of this period, but its notable difference from them lies in the fact that the number of its arms is six. Its natural hands hold the usual full-blown lotus flowers, while the four additional hands show *varadamudrā* (with lotus mark on the palm), *akṣamālā*, *abhayamudrā* and *kamaṇḍalu*. The Dhātrī aspect of the Sun god, the first in the list of the Dvādaśādityas, as described in the *Viśvakarmāvatāra śāstra*, holds lotuses in its two natural hands, a lotus garland (or a fillet of lotus seeds) in its (back) right hand, and a water-vessel in its (back) left (*Dakṣiṇe pauṣkarī mālā kare vāme kamaṇḍaluḥ Padmābhyāṃ śobhitakarā sā Dhātrī prathamā smṛtā*). This North Bengal relief has no doubt much in common with the Dhātrī aspect of the twelve Ādityas, but the increased number of its hands, its solar features and rosary and water-vessel (two of the well-known emblems of Brahmā) in two of its hands bring it in line with the groups of syncretistic icons being noticed here. Dhātṛ is no doubt one of the Ādityas, but Dhātā or Vidhātā is also one of the synonyms of Brahmā Prajāpati, and both these characters appear to be symbolised in this interesting sculpture (PL. XLVII, Fig. 3).

Clear connection of the individual members of the triad with the Sun god can be demonstrated by many more interesting image types of a composite character of the mediaeval period hailing from different parts of India. The

[1] *I.H.Q.*, Vol. VI, 1930, pp. 465-70 and Plate.

Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa invokes Sūrya in this manner: ' Brahmā's, Śiva's and Viṣṇu's bodies are the same as the body of the resplendent Sun whose real nature is three-fold indeed, may he be gracious ' (Ch. 109, v. 71: *Brāhmī Māheśvarī caiva Vaiṣṇavī caiva te tanuḥ| Tridhā yasya svarupantu Bhānorbhāsvān prasīdatu*). The Pīṭhamantra of one aspect of Sūrya described in the *Śāradātilakatantra* means ' Adoration to Saura (an unusual way of calling Sūrya) who is the base of meditation, and who is one with Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva '; this *mantra* also emphasises the syncretic character of the worship of the Sun god.[1] The three-headed and eight-armed standing Sūrya in the Chidambaram temple illustrates this syncretism in an interesting manner. Its natural hands are in the *abhaya* and *varada* poses, the rest holding a discus, a noose, a trident and a stone mason's chisel. It stands barefooted (it is a south-Indian sculpture) on a pedestal on which are carved Aruṇa and seven horses and is attended by two of his consorts.[2] A somewhat similar composition, but a seated one, is carved on the west face of the small shrine dedicated to the Sun god in the south-eastern corner of Limboji Mata's temple at Delmal (Northern Gujrat). Of the three faces, that on the proper right may be of Brahmā, the one on the proper left, of Śiva, the central face being that of Sūrya (Viṣṇu or Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa); two hands (partially broken) hold two lotuses, the other hands, partly preserved, showing a trident, a triple-headed cobra, a water-vessel and *varadamudrā*. These emblems are peculiar to Sūrya, Śiva and Brahmā, the remaining two hands of the image, which are totally gone must have carried the emblems of Viṣṇu. The figure is seated on Garuḍa below which are marked the swan and bull

[1] *Śāradātilakam*, Chapter XIV, vv. 41-2: *Vadetpādaṃ caturthyantam Brahmā-Viṣṇu-Śivātmakam | Saurāya yogapīṭhāya namaḥ padamanantaram || Pīṭhamantro'yamākhyāto Dineśasya jagatpateḥ*. In verse 7 of the same chapter a description is given of the Ballabhārdha variety of the Sun image, in whose hands are to be placed such attributes as *khaṭvāṅga*, *padmas*, *cakra*, *śakti*, *pāśa*, *śṛṇi* (an elephant-goad, known also as *aṅkuśa*), *akṣamālā*, and *kapāla*; we can easily recognise in this assortment many of the emblems of the members of the Brahmanical triad, and those of Sūrya.

[2] H. Krishna Sastri, *South Indian Gods and Goddesses*, p. 236 (Fig. 144).

(not ' a seven-headed horse ' as alternatively suggested by Burgess), the respective vehicles of Brahmā and Śiva. Though the seven horses and their driver Aruṇa are not carved in the pedestal, the boots on the legs of the main figure, its prominent waist-girdle (*avyaṅga*) and the two lotuses typify its solar character. Burgess's remarks about this interesting sculpture are worth-quoting :—' in one figure the four divinities, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā, or the Trimūrti—with Sūrya, appear blended; or shall we rather say it represents a Vaiṣṇava Trimūrti, with Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa as the central figure, seated on his *vāhana* Garuḍa.'[1] There can be no doubt that syncretistic ideology was fully at work in the construction of this image. Another eight-armed seated image of this type is carved on the western side of the central *Bhadra* (structure) of the Śiva temple called Dula Deo at Khajuraho. Some of its hands are broken, but the two full-blown lotuses, the trident, the rosary, the water-vessel, emblems of Sūrya, Śiva and Brahmā, are discernible, those of Viṣṇu being lost. The god is seated in the *vaddha-padmāsana* with the mutilated figure of Aruṇa and three of the seven horses carved on the pedestal; his body is partially covered by a coat of mail.[2]

The Ardhanārīśvaramūrti of Śiva in a way symbolise the syncretic ideology, for they apparently emphasise the union of the principal cult deities of Śaivism and Śāktism. It is true that the ideological union of Śiva and Śakti, the primaeval parents of the universe, has been delineated by many early and late texts, but that sometimes, though rarely, separatist tendencies lurked in the minds of exclusive worshippers of the two deities is also testified by literary data. Gopinath Rao relates a story about this Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva, which seems to suggest the presence of such a tendency. On one occasion the Devas and Ṛṣis circumambulated Śiva and Pārvatī at Kailāsa (the abode of Śiva), but the Ṛṣi Bhṛṅgī being an exclusive worshipper of Śiva went round the god of his choice alone, neglecting to go round or pay homage to the Devī. She grew angry at this insult to her and reduced the sage to a skin-covered skeleton, and Bhṛṅgī was unable to stand erect on his two skinny legs. Śiva took pity on him and provided him with a third leg, which act of grace was thankfully acknowledged by the sage. But to save also Pārvatī's honour, Śiva united his body with hers, in order that Bhṛṅgī would be compelled to pay homage to the goddess, while paying his respects to him. Thus originated this Ardhanārīśvara form, but such was the pugnacious tenacity of this sectarian sage that assuming the form of beetle he cut a hole through the composite body and circumambulated the Śiva part only.[1] The story is no doubt naïve, but in a way it lays stress on the exclusive tendencies of sectarianism, which have been finally overcome (in the case of Bhṛṅgī of the story this was still present) according to the Purāṇic myth-maker by such a composite form of the god and the goddess. The iconic motif of Ardhanārīśvara, however, was evolved at a fairly early period, long before such explanatory myths came to be fabricated, and glyptic and sculptural evidence regarding the existence of such motifs in Northern India as early as the Kushan and Gupta periods has been cited in Chapter V of this book (*supra*, pp. 181-82). Two south-Indian reliefs of the Chola period are being reproduced here to illustrate this composite form, one from the Bṛhadīśvara Temple, Tanjore, and the other from Darasuram. The one from Tanjore shows the three-armed god standing reclining in a slight *tribhaṅga* pose on Nandī, his right half being male, and the left half, female. Of the two right arms, the back hand holds a *triśūla*, the front one being in the *varada* pose; the one hand of the Pārvatī half holds a *nīlotpala* flower. The dress and ornaments of the two halves of the body are

[1] *Archaeological Survey of Western India*, Vol. IX,—*Architectural Antiquities of Northern Gujrat*, pp. 88-9, Pls. LXIX and LXXI, 7.

[2] Stella Kramrisch, *Hindu Temple*, Vol. II, pp. 373-74, Pl. VI. Kramrisch says, ' Such an image is a support of a meditation on Sadāśiva, and has its place of special importance on a temple of Śiva.'

[1] Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 322-23. Rao has not given the source of this story, but he has evidently taken it from one of the Purāṇas, which has extolled the creed of this god.

different inasmuch as they are made to befit a male and a female (Pl. XXXVIII, Fig. 4). The composite god shown in Darasuram relief has many novel features such as three faces, eight arms, a big halo behind its three heads, and he stands in the *samapādasthānaka* pose without Nandī behind him; some of the eight hands hold an *akṣamālā*, a *khaḍga*, a *pāśa*, a *darpaṇa*, the objects in the other hands (one left hand is broken) being indistinct. The male and female halves are clearly demarcated as in the other relief (Pl. XXXIX, Fig. 4). Rao remarks about this exceedingly interesting and extraordinary piece of sculpture, 'In no Sanskrit work that has been examined do we meet with a description of Ardhanārīśvara which agrees with this image . . . . . .' (*op. cit*, Vol. II, p. 332). The multiplicity of hands and faces of this image cannot be satisfactorily explained, but the faces may emphasise the *ugra*, *saumya*, and Umā aspects of the god already noticed in the Elephanta and Gwalior Museum sculptures (*supra.*, pp. 476-77). But one thing worthy of note in this connection is that in none of these reliefs the *ūrdhaliṅga* feature of the composite god is present, which is very often found in such figures of Northern and Eastern India.

Śiva-Lokeśvara, Sūrya-Lokeśvara and Hari-Hara-Sūrya-Buddha icons have been noticed earlier, which show syncretism between Brahmanical Hinduism and Buddhism. Varieties of multi-armed images of syncretistic type hailing from different parts of Eastern India, mainly Bengal, are known, in which Vaiṣṇava and Mahāyāna Buddhist elements have combined, the former being more prominent. Such images may be conveniently described as Viṣṇu-Lokeśvara, and such a one from Surohor in the district of Dinajpur (Bengal) may be noticed first. The four-armed god stands erect under a canopy of seven serpent-hoods, the *gadā* and *cakra* are placed on full-blown lotuses which are held by their stalks by the right and left hands of the god; two Āyudhapuruṣas (identifiable as such on account of a tiny lotus and a conch-shell placed on *nīlotpalas* held by their left hands) stand on either side of the god instead of the usual Śrī and Puṣṭi.

A miniature figure of the Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha is placed just above the central snake-hood, and a six-armed dancing figure of Śiva is carved inside a medallion on the middle face of the *pañcaratha* pedestal below. The figure of dancing Śiva on its pedestal also introduces some Śaiva element in it, and the snake-hoods remind one of Balarāma; the sculpture is of about the twelfth century A.D. (Pl. XLVIII, Fig. 4). Another very interesting image of this type in the same Museum (Exhibit No. 661) originally procured from Kalandarpur in the district of Bogra, North Bengal, though similar to the above in some respects, has some differences. It belongs to the sub-variety of Viṣṇu image named Śrīdhara (according to the *Agnipurāṇa* and *Rūpamaṇḍana*), as the *cakra* and *gadā* are placed on full-blown lotuses on the back right and back left hands respectively, while the front right and front left hands hold a lotus-bud and a tiny conch-shell. The snake-hoods are absent, and there are two tiny kneeling figures on the lowermost corners of the stele, whose identity is uncertain; other iconographic features (Dhyānī-Buddha on the top and dancing Śiva on the bottom etc.) are the same as in the Surohor relief.[1] It will be interesting to compare these two sculptures with some multi-armed images, generally in stone, which have been described by R. D. Banerjee as Lokeśvara-Viṣṇu images (*E.I.S.M.S.*, pp. 94-6, 125, Pl. XXXVIII). The much-mutilated twelve-armed figure originally found in Ghiyasabad in the district of Murshidabad (Bengal) and now in the collection of the Indian Museum, shows the central deity standing erect between two plantain trees with several snake-hoods (probably seven, most of them are broken) spread behind his head (broken); some of the twelve hands are gone, but those which are preserved hold stalks of lotuses, on the double-petalled flowers of which are placed tiny figures of a

[1] N. G. Majumdar, 'A New Type of Viṣṇu from North Bengal', *Modern Review*, February, 1929; *Appendices to Annual Report of V. R. Society*, 1928-29, pp. 15-7 and plate. K. C. Sarkar suggested that this type really represented a Bodhisattva; *V. R. Society's Monograph*, No. 4, pp. 18-23 and plate. But none of them is correct; the figure really stands for a syncretistic image of Viṣṇu-Lokeśvara or a Viṣṇu-Śiva-Lokeśvara.

Garuḍa, a rat, a ploughshare, a conch-shell on the left, and a manuscript (?), a bull, a cup (?) etc. on the right. The figure has usual ornaments including the *vanamālā* or *vaijayantīmālā* of the Viṣṇu images; one hand on either side is placed on two attendant figures in the manner of Viṣṇu's two hands being placed on the heads of the Āyudhapuruṣas. A ten-armed figure hailing from Garui, district Burdwan (Bengal), has great affinity with the Ghiyasabad sculpture from the point of view of its iconography, but many of its details are gone. A well-preserved twelve-armed image of this type originally found at Sonarang (Dacca) and now in the collection of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat Museum, Calcutta, has the tiny figure of Amitābha over the central hood of the snake-hood canopy, and Garuḍa is shown with his hands in the *añjali* pose on the right side of the *triratha* pedestal; the right hands that are in tact show a *makara*, a bird and *varadamudrā* (the others hold indistinct objects), while the left ones hold the tiny figures of a *kūrma*, a *hastin*, a Garuḍa, a *cakra* and a *lāṅgala* (the remaining left hand is broken). M. Ganguly identified this image as that of Avalokiteśvara, and remarked that this form of the Mahāyāna god was very rare, and that brief reference to such twelve-armed Lokeśvaras might be found in *Karaṇḍavyūha*; but although he did not fail to notice some of its Viṣṇuite features, he did not understand the real character of these images [1] The six-armed bronze figure from Sagardighi (Murshidabad, Bengal, and now in the same Calcutta Museum), appears to belong to this class of syncretistic images. It was described by Ganguly as Hṛṣīkeśa, a sub-variety of Viṣṇu, on insufficient data. The god stands under a canopy of seven three-headed Nāgas; the attributes of the image in its right hands are a staff surmounted by an elephant, a discus, the front hand being in the *varada* pose

[1] M. Ganguly, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat Museum*, pp. 32-3, Pl. VII. R. D. Banerjee rightly pointed out that ' the presence of the Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha over the head of this figure along with some of the emblems held in the hands proves the affinity of this class of images between Vaiṣṇava images proper and Lokeśvaras ' (*E.I.S.M.S.*, p. 95).

with the lotus mark on the palm, while a club, a conch-shell and a long staff surmounted by a Garuḍa are held by the left hands. The two attendant figures on the right and left are undoubtedy Padma- and Cakra-Puruṣas, for they hold lotus flower with long stalks, on which are placed a lotus bud and a discus respectively; a lotus is carved in the centre of the pedestal, a figure of Garuḍa being again carved on its left corner. The image can be dated in the 11th century A.D., on the basis of stylistic grounds, as well as of the palaeography of a short inscription engraved on its back.[1] The twenty-armed Viṣṇu image in the V. R. S. Museum (No. 1492) tentatively named as Viśvarūpa and described earlier in this book (Chapter X, p. 426, illustrated in Pl. XXVI, Fig. 2) evinces also these syncretistic traits. The pose of the two pot-bellied attendants of the god and a few other general characteristics appear also to emphasise the blending of Brahmanical Hindu and Mahāyāna elements. These and similar other images leave little doubt about the fact that their worshippers were making definite and conscious efforts to rise above the well-defined limits of sectarianism, while they were using them in their religious rituals.

Arising out of the topic of syncretistic icons and partly allied to it is the theme of inter-relation between Brahmanical Hindu iconography on the one hand and Buddhist and Jaina iconography on the other, and a few words about the latter topic may not be out of place in the end of this book. If a careful analysis is made of a good many of the images associated with the developed phases of Buddhism and Jainism, it can be shown how they are close adaptations of Brahmanical Hindu cult icons. Grünwedel, while speaking about the genesis of the ' rather superfluous creations of the northern schools of Buddhism ', the Bodhisattvas associated with the Mahāyāna schools, observes that with the spread

[1] M. Ganguly, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-40, Pl. XXVI; Ganguly's description of this image is open to criticism. Banerjee's observation about such images quoted below explains their real character : ' This particular class of specimens, therefore, indicates a blending of the older Bhāgavata class of Vaiṣṇava images and the Lokeśvaras of the later Mahāyāna school of Buddhism ' (*op. cit.*, p. 96).

of Buddhism, ' the converts naturally carried into their new religion much of their reverence for the old Hindu gods.' The Hīnayāna sects introduced little change in the nomenclature and iconography of these deities, and Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa and others were accepted under their Hindu names, but they were almost invariably regarded as mere acolytes or attendants of Buddha. ' But with the Mahāyāna schools, whilst these gods were received, they were made to fit into an elaborate system of nomenclature and myth by which each was assigned a place in the illimitable aeons of their cosmogony.' Then he comments on the transference of the attributes of Indra or Śakra to Vajrapāṇi, of those of Brahmā to Mañjuśrī, of those of Viṣṇu to Avalokiteśvara, of the attributes of Śiva to Virūpākṣa, one of the four Mahārājas or Lokapālas in the Mahāyāna pantheon.[1] A comparative study of many of the Brahmanical Hindu icons and the corresponding groups of Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna Buddhist images will enable us to throw more light on this subject. Numerous varieties of the Dhyānī-Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Padmapāṇi) have been described in the *Sādhanamālā*. Their iconographic traits enumerated in these texts, and some of their names mentioned in them, easily help us to find their counterparts or rather prototypes in the Hindu pantheon. The general form of Padmapāṇi-Avalokiteśvara appears to have been derived from Viṣṇu, but there is no doubt that such aspects of the Bodhisattva as Siṃhanāda, Nīlakaṇṭha, Halāhala, Padmanarteśvara, etc. were mere adaptations of Śiva. The *sādhanas* describe Siṃhanāda as *nirbhūṣaṇa* (' without any ornaments '), wearing a *jaṭāmukuṭa* and a tiger-skin, having three eyes and a trident entwined by a white snake (*sitaphaṇaveṣṭitaṃ triśūlam*) by his side. These features are all peculiar to Śiva, and inspite of the additional traits like his lion mount, lotus emblem, etc., there is no difficulty in recognising in him one of the most prominent members of the Brahmanical triad. The ideology behind Siṃhanāda

[1] *Buddhist Art*, pp. 182-83.

is explained in the *dhāraṇīs* in this way; he is the ' healer of diseases ' (one of the traits of Śiva is also this). The names and iconographic traits of the other three varieties of Avalokiteśvara mentioned above leave little doubt about their being the Mahāyānist or Vajrayānist adaptations of the Hindu god. The fierce god Heruka, whose two-armed figures have been found in Eastern India, is usually shown as dancing on a corpse with *vajra* and *kapāla* in his hands, a *khaṭvāṅga* placed along the left part of his body, and with a garland of skulls (*muṇḍamālā*) on his breast; these features emphasise his Śaiva association. Yamāri, another fierce Vajrayāna deity, as its name indicates, is derived from Kālārimūrti of Śiva described in Chapter XI of this book. Some of the iconographic features of Yamari, however, were adopted from the very god of Death, whose enemy he was supposed to have been. Like the Hindu god Yama he has a buffalo for his mount, and a mace with a skull painted on it with a *vajra* on its top, and a noose (*pāśa*) for his emblems; like Śiva he wears a tiger-skin and snake-ornaments. Mañjuśrī might have had some concrete human base (his human original is said to have been instrumental in the introduction of civilisation into Nepal from outside) unlike the Buddhist deities mentioned above, who had abstract ideological background; but his principal emblem, the book of knowledge (*prajñā*), seems to show that he was in a way the Mahāyāna counterpart of Brahmā and Sarasvatī of the Hindu pantheon. The Saptaśatika Hayagrīva, an emanation of Amitābha, and Jambhala, an emanation of Akṣobhya, have their prototypes in Hindu Hayagrīva and Kubera. Hayagrīva, according to the Purāṇic mythology, was primarily a demon, to kill whom Viṣṇu assumed the form of a horse-headed man. The special cognisance of Saptaśatika Hayagrīva is the scalp of a horse over his head. Another aspect of the same god, this time associated with Akṣobhya, is three-faced and eight-armed, and the number of arms as well as the attributes placed in his hands clearly associate him with Viṣṇu. The iconographic peculiarities of Jambhala distinctly connect him with Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa.

Like the latter he is a god of wealth and prosperity, and like him he is pot-bellied, though the bag of treasure in his prototype's hand is replaced by a mungoose vomiting jewels. The early mediaeval relief of the two-armed Jambhala reproduced here (Pl. XLVII, Fig. 2) characteristically portrays his Kubera-like features, and his association with wealth is demonstrated by the carving of eight jars full of coins (the third from the left is overturned, from which coins are pouring out) beneath his lotus seat on which he is seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose. The number of the jars, eight, proves that they stand for Aṣṭanidhis (' eight treasures '), one of the earliest representations of which in a different manner is found in the ' banyan capital ' recovered from Besnagar by Cunningham (cf. *supra*, pp. 104-05). In the Brahmanical Hindu mythology, Kubera is associated with Śrī or Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune and prosperity, who is the presiding deity of the Aṣṭanidhis ; in the Mahāyāna adaptation of him, on the other hand, Vasudhārā (another name of Vasundharā, Bhūmi or Pṛthivī, the mother Earth) appears as his consort. Separate representations of this Buddhist goddess have been found in Eastern India, and one such figure of the mediaeval period is being reproduced here (Pl. XLVIII, Fig. 2). A look at it will convince one that she is a proper consort of Jambhala ; she is seated like her lord in *ardhaparyaṅka* pose on a double-petalled lotus-seat, her right leg resting upon an upturned jar by the side of which there are seven more inverted jars. Her fore-arms are broken, but there are enough indications to show that she held by her right hand an ear of corn (this object is present in well-preserved images of Vasudhārā), emphasising in this manner her association with plenty, as the cornucopia in the hand of the Roman goddess Abundantia (Ardochso in its Kushan set-up) does in a similar manner.[1]

[1] Instances are not unknown where Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna goddess concepts seem to have influenced the iconography of some goddesses belonging to Hindu pantheon. Tārā, a great object of veneration in the Hindu Tantras, appears to have been a direct borrowal from Buddhism. Vajrayoginī's iconographic traits clearly remind us of the Tāntric goddess Chinnamastā held in great veneration by the Śāktas of Bengal (Chinnamastā was one of the ten Mahāvidyās whose worship was prominent in Bengal). The fierce Vajrayāna deity Nairātmā clearly resembles Kālī in her iconography. In late mediaeval times, the Tāntric aspect of Śakti worship seems to have adopted much from the Mahāyāna-cum-Vajrayāna cult, and there is much that is common between many of the deities associated with both.

The Vajrayāna goddess Māricī, especially her general aspect, can be distantly associated with the Brahmanical Sun god on account of some of her peculiar iconographic traits. Like the god she rides on a chariot drawn, however, not by seven horses but by seven pigs, and is attended by female figures shooting arrows. Unlike Sūrya she is multi-armed and holds all sorts of attributes, and when she has more than one face, the added ones are those of sows (she is described in this aspect as Ubhaya-varāhānanā-Māricī). What sort of esoteric symbolism underlies this predilection for sows and pigs is not clearly understandable. But her very name Māricī shows her solar association (Sūrya is Maricīmālī, *i.e.*, ' one endowed with a large number of rays ').

In the hierarchy of the Jaina deities, especially in its broader outlines, many of the subsidiary members of the pantheon were direct copies of the Brahmanical Hindu divinities. The Jaina texts like *Ācāra Dinakara*, *Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra* and *Abhidhāna Cintāmaṇi* classify the secondary Jaina deities under four heads,—Jyotiṣī, Vimānavāsī, Bhavanapati and Vyantara, and long lists of similar and other divinities are also found there. But the deities whose images (beside those of the Jinas) are usually found in Jaina iconographic art comprise the Navagrahas, the Dikpālas, the Yakṣa and Yakṣiṇī attendants of the twenty-four Tīrthaṃkaras, usually described as their Upāsakas and Śāsanadevatās. Besides these there are the sixteen Śruta- or Vidyā-devīs (the presiding deity of which is Sarasvatī), the Aṣṭamātṛkās, the Bhairavas, the sixty-four Yoginīs, Śrī or Lakṣmī, Gaṇeśa, Kṣetrapāla and others. The names and iconographic features of most of them are similar to those of their Brahmanical counterparts, though occasional reorientation in the mode of their representation in early

and mediaeval Jaina art is also met with. The very interesting image-type of Hariṇegamesi or Naigameṣa, a general of Devarāja Indra according to Jaina tradition, distinctly reminds us either of the goat-headed Dakṣa-Prajāpati, or the Chāgavaktra (' goat-faced ') companion of Skanda-Kārttikeya of the Hindu mythology, and one of the various names of Kārttikeya is Naigameya according to early and late lexicons. The Brahmanical Hindu origin of many of the Upāsakas and Śāsanadevatās of the Jinas can be easily demonstrated. Thus Gomukha, the Yakṣa or Upāsaka of Ṛṣabhanātha, the first Tīrthaṃkara, must have been derived from Śiva, as his bull mount, and such of his attributes as battle-axe, noose, etc., prove; his bull face is reminiscent of a mode of representing Nandī, really Śiva himself in his hybrid theriomorphic form. The name and iconography of Yakṣa Brahmā, the Upāsaka of the tenth Jina Śītalanātha, show that he was a Jaina adaptation of Brahmā-Prajāpati of the Hindu triad; he has four faces and a lotus seat, and holds such attributes in his hands as a rosary, a citrus, a noose, a club, etc. Some of the attributes, it is true, are not those of the Hindu Brahmā, yet the name, the number of faces, the lotus seat and the rosary are significant. Similarly, Īśvara and Ṣaṇmukha Yakṣas, the respective Upāsakas of Śreyāṃśanātha and Vimalanātha, the eleventh and thirteenth Jinas, can be definitely associated with Śiva and Subrahmaṇya (Kārttikeya) on the basis of their names, mounts, emblems and other specialities. But such association in the case of some other members of the Jaina pantheon is not sufficiently clear, though their names are taken from Brahmanical Hindu mythology. The iconography of Yakṣas, Kumāra, Garuḍa, Kubera and Varuṇa, the respective Upāsakas of Vāsupujya, Śāntinātha, Mallinātha and Munisubrata, the twelfth, sixteenth, nineteenth and twentieth in the list of twenty-four Tīrthaṃkaras, will prove this. But even in such cases the extant images of these deities show partial similarity with their Brahmanical counterparts. As regards many of the Śāsanadevatās, their names alone may not always emphasise their

Brahmanical association, though in some cases the names, emblems and mounts of them indicate this to a great extent. Ambikā or Kuṣmāṇḍinī, the Śāsanadevatā of Neminātha (the twenty-second Jina) and consort of Gomedha, comes under the latter group, and her iconographic features leave little doubt that she is a Jaina adaptation of the Hindu goddess of the same name. But the Jainas have a mythology of their own about this goddess, which has very little in common with the stories associated with her Hindu original. Ambikā in Jaina iconographic art rides a lion and holds in her four hands a bunch of mangoes, a noose, a child and an elephant goad, and she is thus the Jaina opposite of Durgā, one of whose early appellations is Ambikā; Kuṣmāṇḍinī, another name of the Jaina goddess, appears also to have been derived from an epithet of Durgā, which is Kuṣmāṇḍī or Kuṣmāṇḍā. Sometimes she is shown accompanied by seven dancing female figures, and they may be the Jaina adaptations of the Saptamātṛkās in this context. Padmāvatī, the Śāsanadevatā of the twenty-third Jina Pārśvanātha, is likē him associated with snakes, and there is little doubt that her Hindu counterpart is the folk-goddess Manasā, one of whose names is also Padmāvatī or Padmā.

APPENDIX A

(*a*) *The installation of images*

The images, until they were duly consecrated and ceremonially enshrined, were not regular objects of worship. Elaborate rituals are prescribed in comparatively early and late texts for their due consecration and installation (*mūrtti-pratiṣṭhā*). I give here a free translation of the Chapter on Pratimā-pratiṣṭhāpanam in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Ch. 59, Sudhakar Dvivedi's Edition).

"A wise man should erect a pavilion for the preliminary consecration of an image in the southern quarter or eastern: the pavilion should be furnished with four *toraṇas* (ornamental arches) and (its top) covered with the branches of such trees as *yajña-ḍumbura*, etc. In the different parts of the pavilion,—eastern south-eastern, southern, south-western, western, north-western, northern and north-eastern,—garlands and banners of various colours should be hung. Inside the *maṇḍapa* an earthen altar (*sthaṇḍila*) should be raised, and the latter should be first sprinkled with sand and then covered over with *kuśa* grass; now the image should be placed on it with its head and feet resting on a *bhadrāsana* (a kind of pedestal).[1]

[1] In three verses just before it, the author refers to the different materials out of which the images are made, and the different results to be obtained by making and worshipping them:—

Āyuḥśrībalajayadā dārumayī mṛnmayī tathā pratimā |
Lokahitāya maṇimayī sauvarṇī puṣṭidā bhavati ||
Rajatamayī kīrttikarī prajāvivṛddhiṃ karoti tāmramayī |
Bhūlābhaṃ tu mahāntaṃ śailī pratimāthavā liṅgam ||
Śaṅkūpahatā pratimā pradhānapuruṣaṃ kulaṃ ca ghātayati |
Svabhropahatā rogānupadravāṃśca kṣayaṃ kurute ||

The verses can be translated thus: 'Images made of wood or clay bring to (their worshippers) long life, fortune, strength and victory; those made of jewels are for the good of the people, and the golden ones bring prosperity. Images made of silver bring fame, while those made of copper cause increase of population. (By worshipping) images or Śivaliṅgas made of stone, (one) obtains extensive plots of land. Those images from which nails come out obliquely (Utpala: *Śaṅkustiryag-*

Now, the image should be successively bathed with various kinds of waters; first, a decoction of the (twigs of) *plakṣa*, *aśvattha*, *udumbara*, *śirīṣa* and *vaṭa* should be used, then the auspicious *sarvauṣadhi* water and next the water from sacred places, in which earth raised by elephants and bulls, earth from mountain, anthill, confluences of rivers, lotus ponds, and *pañcagavya* are mixed, should be poured; when the image is being bathed with the above and with scented water in which gold and precious gems are put in, it should be placed with its head towards the east; during this ceremony, *tūrya* (a kind of musical instrument—a trumpet) should be sounded, and '*puṇyāha*' ('auspicious day') and Veda *mantras* should be uttered.[1] The most respected of the Brāhmaṇas should then chant *Aindra mantras* (*mantras* associated with the Vedic god Indra) in the eastern and *Agnimantras* in the south-eastern quarter; these Brāhmaṇas should be honoured with handsome offerings or fees (*dakṣiṇā*). The Brahman (*i.e.*, the priest) should offer *homa* to fire with the *mantra* particular to the deity being enshrined. If during the performance of the *homa*, the fire becomes full of smoke, or the flames turn from right to left or the burning faggots emit frequent sparks, then it is not auspicious; it is also inauspicious, if the priest forgets his *mantras*, or, (the flames) rage backwards. After having bathed the image and decked it with new cloth and ornaments and worshipped it with flowers and sandal paste, the priest should lay it down on a well-spread bed. When the image has 'slept' its full, it should be roused from

nirgataḥ kīlakaḥ) destroy the chief (Utpala: *pradhāna-puruṣam nāyakaṃ*) and (his) line; those which have holes on them cause disease, calamity and decay.

Utpala quotes a passage from Kāśyapa, which is similar to the last couplet: *Yārcā śaṅkuhatā sā tu pradhānakulanāśinī | Chidreṇopahatā yā tu bahudoṣakarī matā ||*

[1] The following plants constitute *sarvauṣadhi* according to Utpala: *jayā*, *jayantī*, *jīvantī*, *jīvaputrī*, *punarnavā*, *viṣṇu-krāntā*, *abhayā*, *viśvambharī*, *mahā* modā*, *sahadevī*, *pūrṇakośā*, *śatāvarī*, *sahasravīryā*, *lakṣmaṇā*. The *pañcagavyas* are cow-dung, urine of the cow, milk, curd and clarified butter.

In performing *nitya* (daily) and *naimittika* (occasional) *pūjās*, the Yajamāna, after performing *ācamana*, will think of Viṣṇu after uttering a particular *mantra* (*Viṣṇu-smaraṇa*) and then say: '*Om karttavye'smin,—karmaṇi puṇyāhaṃ bhavanto brubantu*' ('In this action that should be done, you kindly say that the day be auspicious') and the Brahmin priest should say '*Om puṇyāham*') ('yes, let it be auspicious'); this is '*puṇyāhavācana*'.

sleep with songs and dances and should be installed at a time fixed by the astrologers. Then after worshipping the image with flowers, garments, sandal paste, and the sounds of conch-shell and trumpet, it should be carefully taken inside the sanctum from the pavilion, keeping the temple to the right (*prādakṣiṇyena*). After making profuse offerings (to the deity) and honouring the Brāhmaṇas and persons assembled there, a piece of gold should be put into the mortise-hole of the *piṇḍikā* (base), and the image should be fixed (in its base). The enshriner of the image, by honouring specially the astrologer, the Brāhmaṇas, the assembled persons and the image-maker or the architect (the word here used is *sthapati* explained by Utpala as *vardhakī*), enjoys bliss in this world and in heaven. Images of Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Śiva, Mātṛgaṇas, Brahmā, Buddha and the Jinas should be installed by a Bhāgavata, a Maga, a Pāśupata, one well-versed in the worship (of the Śakti), a Brāhmaṇa knowing the Vedas well, a person of the Śākya race, a Digambara Jaina respectively, according to the different rituals prescribed in the different sectarian systems mentioned above. The installation of a god (*i.e.*, its image) is recommended in the bright fortnight in the period of the summer-solstice and during certain particular positions of the planets and asterisms, and in days other than Tuesday and in a time particularly auspicious to the donor of the image. I have given here in brief the general and easily practicable rules about the preliminary consecration (*adhivāsa*) and installation (*pratiṣṭhā*) of images. In the *Sāvitra* (*śāstra*), however, preliminary consecration and installation (of individual divinities) have been elaborately treated (*Adhivāsana-sanniveśane sāvitre pṛthageva vistarāt*)."

One or two points in the above rendering of the chapter on Pratimā-pratiṣṭhāpanam require notice. In the installation ceremony of the sectarian gods and goddesses, some importance is undoubtedly given to Vedic ritualism; in the preliminary consecration, the Indra and Agni *mantras* are to be uttered and the Vedic *homa* is to be performed. But during the performance of the *homa*, the *mantra* particular to the deity whose image is being installed is to be recited. The principal installation is to be done by a sectarian initiate according to the rites prescribed in the individual sectarian system. The mixed ritualism, partly Vedic

and mostly sectarian, has been curiously enough described by Utpala as *vaidik vidhāna*, while explaining the word *sāmānyam* in the last verse (*Sāmānyamaviśeṣaṃ vaidikena vidhānena*). Then reference is made in the last verse to the elaborate treatment of the same topic in *Saura śāstra* in which detailed descriptions of rituals followed in the installation of different divinities are incorporated.[1]

The whole of the 19th Vilāsa (named *Prātiṣṭhiko*) of the *Haribhaktivilāsa* supplies us with an extremely full account of *Śrīmūrtti-pratiṣṭhā* (the installation of the auspicious image of the Lord Vāsudeva) based on the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* and several Purāṇas. The *Saṃkarṣaṇa-kāṇḍa* of the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* itself is principally devoted to this topic, but it is still in manuscript form (note that the *Saura-kāṇḍa* in this Pāñcarātra text also contains something on *pratiṣṭhā* and compare this with the last line of the chapter just quoted). Lastly, notice should be taken of the honours to be done to the architect or the sculptor, the artist or artists responsible for the construction of the image and the building of the temple. *Haribhaktivilāsa* quotes from various texts like the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, *Matsyapurāṇa* and the *Hayāśīrṣa Pañcarātra* about the full satisfaction and honour to be given to the artists by the person who is enshrining an image (*cf.* the section on *Śilpiparitoṣaṇam* in the 19th Vilāsa).[2]

(*b*) *Jīrṇoddhāra*

Restoration of old and dilapidated shrines and replacement of broken, decaying and sometimes defiled images or other cult

[1] Utpala gives two explanations of the last line of the last verse. The first is given above by me; the other is:—*Athavā sāvitre savituradityasya ye adhivāsana-sanniveśane pṛthageva vistarāt tacchāstre saure bhavata iti.*

[2] *Tato Viṣṇuṃ samānīya sudhautaṃ suparīkṣitam |*
Śilpinaṃ pūjayet paścād vastrālaṅkaraṇādibhiḥ ||
(*Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*)

Ānīya liṅgamarccāṃ vā śilpinaḥ pūjayedbudhaḥ |
Vastrābharaṇaratnaiśca ye ca tatparicārakāḥ |
Kṣamadhvamiti tān brūyāt yajamāno hyataḥ param ||
(*Matsyapurāṇa*)

Pūjayitvā tu pratimāṃ śilpinaṃ toṣayet tataḥ |
Gandhapuṣpādibhirvipraṃ toṣayed kaṭakādibhiḥ ||
Sarvve' tha karmminastasyāstasmin kāle pṛthak pṛthak |
Kṣamāpayita tān sarvvān priyapraśnena sarvvathā ||
(*Hayaśīrśa Pañcarātra*)

objects by new ones have been regarded from a long time as great acts of religious merit in India. In some texts, these are even described as more meritorious than the establishment of new shrines and construction of new images. One of the earliest instances of *jīrṇoddhāra*, though associated with Buddhism, has been recorded in the steatite casket discovered at Shinkot in Bajaur territory, 20 miles to the north-west of the confluence of the Panjkora and Swat rivers, beyond the borders of the old North-West Frontier Province. Two sets of inscriptions are engraved on it, the earlier one referring to the establishment or consecration of (the corporeal relic) of the Buddha in the reign of Mahārāja Minadra (Menander), the donor being a person named Viyakamitra, the *apraca-raja* (' one who has no king as his adversary '). The later portion of the record also refers to the establishment of the corporeal relic of the Buddha, and of the bowl, but by a person named Vijayamitra, also an *apraca-raja* and evidently a descendant of Viyakamitra, on the 25th day of Vaiśākha of the 5th regnal year. This subsequent epigraph records—" This corporeal relic having been broken is not held in worship with zeal. It is decaying in course of time, (and) is not honoured; (and here) by the offering of alms and water, ancestors are no longer propitiated; (and) the receptacle of that (relic) has been cast aside. (Now) in the fifth year and on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Vaiśākha, this has been established by Vijayamitra, who has no king as his adversary." [1] Thus, there is no doubt about its being a clear case of *jīrṇoddhāra*. H. Thsang says that " in recent times Śaśāṅka, the enemy and oppressor of Buddhism, cut down the Bodhi-tree, destroyed its roots down to the water, and burned what remained. A few months afterwards Pūrṇavarmā, the last descendant of Aśoka on the throne of Magadha, by pious efforts brought the tree back to life and in one night it became above ten feet high. This king then built round

[1] *Ime śarira paluga-bhud(r)ao na sakare atrita | sa śariat(r)ikalad(r)ena śadhro na piṃḍoyakeyi pitrin* ***griṇayat(r)i*** *| tasa ye patre apomua | Vaṣaye paṃcamaye 41 Veś(r)akh(r)asa masasa divase-paṃcaviś(r)aye iyo prat(r)ithavit(r)e Vijayamitrena apracarajena Bhag(r)avatu Śakimuṇisa samasa(ṃ)budhasa śarira |*
—*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, p. 7. The Kharoṣṭhi record was edited by N. G. Majumdar (*ibid.*, pp. 1-8), who, however, did not notice this aspect of the epigraph.

it a stone wall 24 feet high " (Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, Vol. II, p. 115). Here also is a clear case of restoration after the original shrine was defiled by a non-believer, for the stone wall which was set up by Pūrṇavarmā was nothing but a re-erection. The *śilā-prākāra* was originally erected in the first century B.C., through the pious zeal and munificence of a lady, Āryā Kuraṅgī by name, the wife of Indrāgnimitra, perhaps a local chieftain. What Pūrṇavarmā did was to use the old materials—the *thabhas* (pillars), *sūcīs* (joining pieces) and *uṣṇīṣas* (coping stones), all made of greyish sandstone—in rebuilding the wall, using new material (granite) when the old fell short of his requirements; there are clear structural indications which fully prove this point (Barua, *Gayā and Buddha Gayā*, Vol. II, pp. 12 ff.). I have referred in the last page of my first chapter to the rebuilding of the Chauñsaṭ Yoginī temple at Bheraghat by Alhanādevī, the queen of the Haihaya King Gayakarṇadeva, during the reign of her son Narasiṃhadeva, in the Kalacurī-Cedī year 907 (1155 A.D.). Cunningham noticed that the style of architecture of this temple was plain and simple and might belong to any period between 900 and 1200 A.D. But the characters of the inscriptions on the pedestals of the images point to the earlier date and thus it is clear that they were restored and re-enshrined at a later date.[1] R. D. Banerjee proved with the help of the images divisible into two broad groups, one standing, made of brittle reddish sandstone, with no inscription, and the other seated, mostly carved out of a dull greenish yellow sandstone, inscribed with letters datable in the 10th century A.D. inside the circular temple, that 'before the building of the circular temple in the 10th century A.D., another structure existed on this spot.' Banerjee thinks it extremely probable that the most ancient shrine on the top of the hill, on which the circular temple stands, was erected in the Kushan period, and it enshrined the standing uninscribed images of brittle reddish sandstone.[2]

[1] Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. IX, pp. 11, 73. Cunningham says, " the old circular wall, with its inscribed statues, belonged to the 10th century and the cloister with its roof was the work of Queen Alhaṇādevī in the 12th century."

[2] R. D. Banerjee, *The Haihayas of Tripuri and their Monuments* (*M.A.S.I.*, No. 23), pp. 69-70.

The last few verses of the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam*, being edited by me with translation and notes in Appendix B, Part II, contain some interesting details about the replacement of old images by new ones, similar to those incorporated in Ch. 67 of the *Agnipurāṇa*. The details, however, contain more about the manner in which the decaying images are to be destroyed than about their restoration. My study of some ancient Brahmanical and Buddhist images in the Sarnath and Rajshahi Museums has convinced me that attempts were sometimes made to restore them when they were partially damaged. The *Śilparatna* tells us that " when an image is slightly damaged, it should never be discarded; but when its arms, hands, feet and legs are severed, when it is broken, split up or nine *yava* portion of it is gone or when it gets disfigured, it is usually to be discarded. If its fingers, etc., are cut up (or broken) the sages recommend binding (repairing) them." [1]

(c) *The Ideology behind the Hindu Images*

It has been shown in Chapter III (p. 81) of this book that the images used by the Hindu worshippers in their religious rites symbolised in a way their concept about a god or his various aspects, and these cult objects were primarily nothing but the consecrated symbols of the divinities. The Pāñcarātrins, it is true, conceived them as the very auspicious bodies (*Śrī-vigrahas*) of their god and his numerous manifestations, but even they also were fully aware of this character of the icons. The Arcā (divine image for worship) was to them one such manifestation, and the devout Bhāgavatas considered the duly consecrated images of their god as so many of his Avatāras (incarnatory forms). There are many texts where a great deal of emphasis is laid on the ideology behind the individual icons, and the *Viṣṇudharmottara* can be regarded as one such representative

[1] *Śilparatna*, Part II, p. 206 :—

Doṣe laghutare bimbaṃ naiva tyājyaṃ kadācana |
Bāhucchede karacchede pādacchede tathaiva ca ||
Tathaiva sphuṭite bhinne yasmin navayave gate |
Vairūpyaṃ jāyate yasya tat tyajyaṃ prāyaśo bhavet ||
Aṅgulyādi paricchede bandhanaṃ sas'yate budhaiḥ |

text. The observations often made by the Purāṇakāra after describing the images of various divinities deal with their real character, and are associated with different ideologies underlying them. Numerous extracts may be quoted from this text by way of illustrating this point, but a few alone connected with the icons of the Brahmanical triad may serve our purpose here. The real nature of Brahmā's image is delineated in Book III, Chapter 46 of this Purāṇa. The four faces of the god are explained as representing the four Vedas, the eastern, southern, western and northern characterising respectively the *Ṛgveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda*; his arms are taken to symbolise the four major quarters. The water-vessel in one of his hands stands for the primeval waters from which spring all the movable and immovable beings, and the rosary in another hand of the god indicates eternal Time (Kāla); his skin garment (he wears the hide of a black antelope) symbolises sacrifice. The seven swans drawing his chariot (Brahmā is described in this text as riding on a chariot drawn by seven swans, *saptahaṃse rathe sthitaḥ*) stand for the seven worlds,—*bhuḥ, bhuvaḥ, svar, mahaḥ, jana, tapas*, and *satya* (Bk. III, Ch. 46, vv. 8-13). The transformation (*vikṛti*) of the whole universe is idealised by the concrete form of lord Viṣṇu, the *Kaustubha* jewel on whose breast is nothing but knowledge (*jñāna*), the *vanamālā* (the long garland hanging down from his neck) is the principle which binds the whole universe; his garment stands for *avidyā* (ignorance, illusion encompassing the world), and his mount Garuḍa of quick and powerful motion is to be known as mind present in all rational beings (*Manastu Garuḍa jñeyaḥ sarvabhūtaśarīragam*). His eight arms stand for four major and four minor quarters, and his four faces (this is an evident allusion to the four-faced Caturmūrti of the god, which illustrates the concept of the unified primary Vyūhas) typify knowledge (*jñāna*), strength (*bala*), sovereignty (*aiśvarya*) and power (*śakti*). The discus and the mace in the two hands assignable to Vāsudeva symbolise Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the ploughshare and pestle in the Saṃkarṣaṇa hands indicate Time and Death, the bow and arrow in the Pradyumna hands symbolise Yogic fire with which the Yogins hit their supreme

target, and of the sword (Nandaka) and shield in the Aniruddha hands the latter represents the cover of *ajñāna* (lack of true knowledge) necessary for the creation of the world, while the former stands for renunciation (*vairāgya*) which severs all ties. The sage Mārkaṇḍeya narrates to his interlocutor Vajra in this manner "the form of that formless (Being) with which the highest and the most pre-eminent of the universe covers the whole of it and also supports it" (. . . . . *rūpaṃ sarvajaganmayasya| Evaṃ śarīreṇa jagatsamagraṃ bibharti devaḥ sa jagatpradhānaḥ;* Bk. III, Ch. 47, vv. 1-18). The five faces of Śiva,—Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna represent the five gross elements—earth, water, heat, wind and the sky respectively. They are also known individually as Mahādeva (eastern), Bhairava (southern), Nandivaktra (western), Umāvaktra (northern) and Sadāśiva (the fifth face on the top known also as Īśāna). The three eyes of the eastern face known as Mahādeva are the sun, the moon and the fire . . . . . His ten arms, two being allotted to each face, stand for the ten quarters, and the various attributes assigned to the hands also esoterically represent other entities; thus the club and the citrus (*mātuluṅga*) in the hands allotted to Bhairava, symbolise death and the numerous atoms (*paramāṇavaḥ*) which are the 'seed' of the whole world. The shield and trident in the hands allotted to Nandivaktra face (that behind the Mahādeva, the eastern or the central face) symbolise the unmanifest and manifest (matter—here the text is corrupt); the mirror and the lotus assigned to the Umāvaktra (the northern, *i.e.*, the face on the left of the central Mahādeva face) symbolise pure knowledge and renunciation (*Ādarśaṃ nirmalaṃ jñānaṃ vairāgyaṃ ca tathotpalam*). The matted locks on the head of Mahādeva represent the Brahmans, the crescent on the forehead of the god is known as *aiśvarya* (divine essence); Vāsuki (the snake) indicates divine anger which destroys the three worlds. The large and spotted tiger-skin (which is worn by Śiva) is Desire (which is also extensive and variegated), and the bull (Śiva's mount) is the Divine Dharma having four feet (*Vṛṣo'hi bhagavān Dharmaścatuṣpādaḥ prakīrttitaḥ*). Prakṛti which brings forth the universe is all white and Maheśvara's colour is likewise all white (Bk. III, Ch. 48, vv. 1-19). In most of the

subsequent chapters of this section of the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, the descriptions of the concrete forms of the various deities are almost invariably accompanied by references to such esoteric symbolism underlying them, and the Purāṇakāra thus lays emphasis on the fact that what is being worshipped is not what it appears to be, but is something beyond it.

It may be mentioned here incidentally that verses 4-8 of Chapter 48, which have just been briefly noticed in connection with Śiva image and its ideology, supply us interesting and authoritative data in support of the true interpretation of the so-called Trimūrti of Elephanta suggested in Chapter XI (pp. 476-77) of this book. The east-facing Mahādeva-face is the placid central face of the Elephanta sculpture, for the temple faces east and the south-facing Bhairava-face is the terrific face to the right of this central face; the west-facing Bull-face (Nandivaktra, and Nandī is bull) should have been on the back of Mahādeva-face, but as it is a relievo-sculpture it is invisible. But the northern face, *i.e.*, the one to the left of the central Mahādeva-face is described in the text as Umāvaktra and thus its real character is definitely settled. The fifth face (*i.e.*, the *Iśāna-* or *Sadāśiva-*face) which symbolises *vyoma* or *ākāśa*, was to have been placed on the top, but as the *Rūpamaṇḍana* informs us that it cannot be seen even by the yogīs (*Pañcamaṃ ca tatheśānaṃ yogināmapyagocaram*).

(*d*) *Purāṇic Deities in Vedic Texts*

In connection with the descriptions of the cult-icons in the last four chapters of this book, reference has often been made to the problem of the first appearance of the individual cult-deities in Vedic or Brahmanical literature. The gods and goddesses whose images were made and worshipped by different sectarian groups of people were mostly epic and Purāṇic in character, though in the growth and development of the concepts of some of them, Vedic-Brāhmaṇic elements had played an important part. But it will be futile to seek for any and every one of these developed god-concepts in the early Vedic or for the matter of that even in late Vedic literature. Sometimes the name of a Purāṇic deity may be identical with that of a Vedic one, but this similarity in name

will not mean that they were originally identical in character. This can be demonstrated with the help of the names or epithets of two Purāṇic deities, Gaṇapati and Nidhipati, the former denoting the elephant-headed deity Gaṇeśa and the latter, Kubera, the lord of the Yakṣas and treasures. The name Gaṇapati occurs in the *Ṛgveda* (II. 2, 23), but it does not certainly mean in this context the Purāṇic god Gaṇeśa. It has been briefly mentioned earlier (p. 356) that Vedic Gaṇapati denoted Brahmaṇaspati; in this context he was the leader of the groups of the Devas and similar other beings belonging to his own order (*Gaṇānāṃ devādigaṇānāṃ sambandhinaṃ Gaṇapatiṃ svīyānāṃ patiṃ*; Sāyaṇa). Brahmaṇaspati was being invoked by the seer in that hymn as 'Gaṇapati of the Gaṇas and the most omniscient among the omniscients' (*Gaṇānāṃ Ganapatiṃ Kaviṃ Kavīnāṃ*; Sāyaṇa explains *Kavīnāṃ* as *krānta-darśināṃ*). Nidhipati does not occur in this early Vedic passage, but it occurs probably for the first time in the *Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā* of the *Śukla Yajurveda* school, along with the Gaṇapati of the Ṛgvedic passage. The whole extract (*V.S.* 23, 19) reads: *Gaṇānāṃ tvā Gaṇapatiṃ havāmahe priyāṇām tvā priyapatiṃ havāmahe nidhīnāṃ tvā nidhipatiṃ havāmahe vaso mama* | *Āhamajāni garbhadamā tvamajāsi garbhadham*. But the context in which this invocation occurs shows that all these three epithets *gaṇapati*, *priyapati* and *nidhipati* are addressed to the horse killed in the Aśvamedha sacrifice by the chief queen when she lies down with the dead horse under cover. The *Maitrayanīya Saṃhitā* of the *Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda* school not only quotes the identical passage, but also adds a few words which show that the chief queen of the sovereign performing the Aśvamedha sacrifice was desirious of progeny, virile and powerful, and this part of the sacrifice where the mantra is uttered was thought necessary for the fulfilment of her desire. Thus, there can be no question of finding in Gaṇapati and Nidhipati of the Vedic texts even the slightest reference to the Purāṇic gods Gaṇeśa and Kubera.

In at least one late Saṃhitā text, however, mention is made of some of Purāṇic deities and their *gāyatrī-mantras*. The *Maitrāyanīya Saṃhitā* introduces the *Śatarudriya* text with an invocation of Śarva ('arrow-wielder', one of the names of Rudra)

and addresses him as Śiva. Then begin the *gāyatri-mantras* of Puruṣa-Mahādeva (Rudra), Girisutā (' the daughter of the mountain '—Gaurī), Kumāra-Kārttikeya (Skanda), Karāṭa(?)-Hastimukha (Dantī, *i.e.*, Gaṇeśa with the head of a tusker), Caturmukha-Padmāsana (Brahmā), Keśava-Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu), Bhāskara-Prabhākara (Bhānu—Sun god), Somarāja-Mahārāja (Candra—Moon god), Jvalana—Vaiśvānara (Vahṇi—Fire god), Tyajapa (? Japa)—Mahājapa (Dhyāna), Paramātmā-Vainateya (Sṛṣṭi). In this curious assortment of deities, we not only find the names of the Brahmanical triad of the Purāṇic times and those of Śiva's consort and their two sons Kārttikeya and Gaṇeśa, but also the names of Sūrya, Candra and even of Meditation or concentration (personified), and the Paramātman, the Supreme Soul.[1] We do not fail to find even some iconographic traits of two at least of these concrete divinities, *viz.*, Gaṇapati (described here as *karāṭa*, i.e., ' one with the cheek of an elephant,' *hastimukha*, ' one having the face of an elephant'), and *dantī*, ' one with tusks ', and Brahmā (described here as Caturmukha) four-faced, and Padmāsana, seated on a lotus. But there can be no doubt that this section at least of the *Saṃhitā* is very late on account of its containing these *gāyatrī-mantras* which bring it in line with the tenth Prapāṭhaka of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*. It should also be noted in this connection that the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* and the *Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā* which also contain the *Śatarudriya* passage do not contain this introductory portion. The first Anuvāka of the Tenth Prapāṭhaka of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* after quoting some extracts from Vedic and Upaniṣadic texts gives us the *gāyatrī-mantras* of Puruṣa-Sahasrākṣa-Mahādeva-Rudra, Puruṣa-Mahādeva-Rudra, Puruśa-

[1] My attention was drawn to this passage by Gaurinath Sastri of the Sanskrit College, Calcutta. A few extracts may be quoted from this introductory passage: *Devānāṃ ca ṛṣiṇāṃ cāsurāṅāṃ ca pūrvajam | Mahādevaṃ sahasrākṣaṃ Śivamāvāhayāmyaham || Tat-Puruṣāya vidmahe Mahādevāya dhīmahi | Tan-no Rudraḥ pracodayāt || Tad-Gāṅgaucyāya vidmahe Girisutāya dhīmahi | Tan-no Gaurī pracodayāt || Tat-Kumārāya vidmahe Kārttikeyāya dhīmahi | Tannaḥ Skandaḥ pracodayāt || Tat-karāṭāya* (This should be *karaṭāya* meaning ' one having the cheek of an elephant ') *vidmahe hastimukhāya dhīmahi | Tan-no Dantī pracodayāt || Tac-Caturmukhāya vidmahe Padmāsanāya dhīmahi | Tan-no Brahmā pracodayāt || Tat-Keśavāya vidmahe Nārāyaṇāya dhīmahi | Tan-no Viṣṇuḥ pracodayāt ||*

Vakra-tuṇḍa-Dantī (Gaṇeśa with his sinuous elephant-trunk), Puruṣa-Cakratuṇḍa—Nandī (perhaps the bull-form of Śiva), Puruṣa-Mahāsena-Ṣaṇmukha (Kumāra-Kārttikeya), Puruṣa-Suvarṇapakṣa-Garuḍa, Vedātmana-Hiraṇyagarbha-Brahma, Nārāyaṇa-Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, Vajranakha-Tīkṣṇadaṃṣṭra-Nārasiṃha, Bhāskara-Mahādyutikara-Āditya, Vaiśvānara-Lālola-Agni, and Kātyāyana (ī)—Kanyākumārī-Durgī (X. 1, 5-7). In the 16th section of the same Anuvāka occurs this three-line verse which contains the names of all these 12 deities whose *gāyatris* have been recited :—

Rudro Rudraśca Dantiśca Nandiḥ Ṣaṇmukha eva ca|
Garuḍo Brahma-Viṣṇuśca Nārasiṃhasthaiva ca|
Ādityo'gniśca Durgiśca krameṇa dvādaśāmbhasi||

If we compare these two lists, one from the *Maitrāyanīya Saṃhitā* and the other from the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, we find much that is common to both. But the Āraṇyaka text leaves out more abstract entities like *Dhyāna* and *Paramātmā*, and even a concrete one like Candra, and brings in new concrete ones like Nandī, Garuḍa and Nārasiṃha, changes some epithets and counts Mahādeva-Rudra twice; thus, *Hastimukha* is replaced by *Vakratuṇḍa*, Kumāra-Kārttikeya-Skanda by Puruṣa-Mahāsena-Ṣaṇmukha, Caturmukha-Padmāsana-Brahmā by Vedātmana (should it be Vedānana?)—Hiraṇyagarbha-Brahma (ā?), Keśava-(Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu) by Nārāyaṇa-Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, Bhāskara-Prabhākara-Bhānu by Bhāskara-Mahādyutikara-Āditya, etc. Another feature of the *Āraṇyaka* text is that more iconographic traits are incorporated here in the descriptive epithets of these deities. The *Mahānārayaṇa Upaniṣad*, much later in point of date than the two texts mentioned above, not only contains almost everything of this nature found in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, but has also some additional *mantras* like those of Mahādurgā, Bhagavatī, Gaurī, Sūrya, Bhānu, etc., which are nothing but different aspects of the same deity (Mahādurgā, Bhagavatī and Gaurī are epithets of Durgī, and Sūrya, Bhānu, etc., of Āditya, etc.). The iconography of many of these concrete god-concepts is also much developed in this late text (*Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, IV. 1-18). The picture that is presented in these late Vedic texts, however, leaves little doubt that the religious outlook

of the Hindus of this period had undergone a great deal of transformation, and the Laukika Devatās (*cf.* Patañjali's statement about the two types of deities quoted in Chapter IX of this book) had taken predominance over the Vaidika ones.

APPENDIX B

PART I

बृहत्संहिता

(अ: ५७)

जालान्तरगे भानौ यदणुतरं दर्शनं रजो याति।
तद्विन्द्यात् परमाणुं प्रथमं तद्धि प्रमाणानाम् ॥१॥
परमाणुरजो बालाग्रलिक्षयूकं यवोऽङ्गुलं चेति।
अष्ट गुणानि यथोत्तरमङ्गुलमेकं भवति सङ्ख्या ॥२॥
देवागारद्वारस्याष्टांशोनस्य यस्तृतीयोऽंश:।
तत्पिण्डिकाप्रमाणं प्रतिमा तद्द्विगुणपरिमाणा ॥३॥
स्वैरङ्गुलप्रमाणैर्द्वादशविस्तीर्णमायतं च मुखम्।
नग्नजिता तु चतुर्दश दैर्घ्यण द्राविडं कथितम् ॥४॥
नासाललाटचिबुकग्रीवाश्चतुरङ्गुलास्तथा कर्णौ।
द्वे अङ्गुले च हनुनी चिबुकं च द्व्यङ्गुलं विततम् ॥५॥
अष्टाङ्गुलं ललाटं विस्ताराद् द्व्यङ्गुलात् परे शङ्खौ।
चतुरङ्गुलौ तु शङ्खौ कर्णौ तु द्व्यङ्गुलौ पृथुलौ ॥६॥
कर्णोपान्त: काय्योंऽर्धपञ्चमे भ्रूसमेन सूत्रेण।
कर्णस्रोत: सुकुमारकं च नेत्रप्रबन्धसमम् ॥७॥
चतुरङ्गुलं वसिष्ठ: कथयति नेत्रान्तकर्णयोर्विवरम्।
अधरोऽङ्गुलप्रमाणस्तस्यार्धेनोत्तरोष्ठश्च ॥८॥
अर्धाङ्गुला तु गोच्छा वक्त्रं चतुरङ्गुलायतं काय्यंम्।
विपुलं तु सार्धमङ्गुलमव्यात्तं त्र्यङ्गुलं व्यात्तम् ॥९॥
द्व्यङ्गुलतुल्यौ नासापुटौ च नासापुटाग्रतो ज्ञेया।
स्याद् द्व्यङ्गुलमुच्छ्रायश्चतुरङ्गुलमन्तरं चाक्ष्णो: ॥१०॥
द्व्यङ्गुलमितोऽक्षिकोशो द्व नेत्रे तत्त्रिभागिका तारा।
दृक्तारा पञ्चांशो नेत्रविकाशोऽङ्गुलं भवति ॥११॥
पर्यन्तात् पर्यन्तं दश भ्रुवोऽर्धाङ्गुलं भ्रुवोलेखा।
भ्रुमध्यं द्व्यङ्गुलकं भ्रूर्दैर्घ्येणाङ्गुलचतुष्कम् ॥१२॥

कार्य्या तु केशरेखा भ्रूबन्धसमाङ्गुलार्धविस्तीर्णा।
नेत्रान्ते करवीरकमुपन्यसेदङ्गुलप्रमितम् ॥१३॥
द्वात्रिंशत् परिणाहाच्चतुर्दशायामतोऽङ्गुलानि शिरः।
द्वादश तु चित्रकर्मणि दृश्यन्तु विंशतिरदृश्याः ॥१४॥
आस्यं सकेशनिचयं षोडश दैर्घ्येण नग्नजित्प्रोक्तम्।
ग्रीवा दशविस्तीर्णा परिणाहाद्विंशतिः सैका ॥१५॥
कण्ठाद् द्वादश हृदयं हृदयान्नाभी च तत्प्रमाणेन।
नाभीमध्यान्मेढ्रान्तरं च तत्तुल्यमेवोक्तम् ॥१६॥
उरू चाङ्गुलमानैश्चतुर्युता विंशतिस्तथा जङ्घे।
जानुकपिच्छे चतुरङ्गुले च पादौ च तत्तुल्यौ ॥१७॥
द्वादश दीर्घा षट् पृथुतया च पादौ त्रिकायताङ्गुष्ठौ।
पञ्चाङ्गुलपरिणाहौ प्रदेशिनी त्र्यङ्गुलं दीर्घा ॥१८॥
अष्टांशाष्टांशोनाः शेषाङ्गुल्यः क्रमेण कर्त्तव्याः।
स चतुर्थभागमङ्गुलमुत्सेधोऽङ्गुष्ठकस्योक्तः ॥१९॥
अङ्गुष्ठनखः कथितश्चतुर्थभागोनमङ्गुलं तज्ज्ञैः।
शेषनखानामर्धाङ्गुलं क्रमात् किञ्चिदूनं वा ॥२०॥
जङ्घाग्रे परिणाहश्चतुर्दशोक्तस्तु विस्तरात् पञ्च।
मध्ये तु सप्त विपुला परिणाहात् त्रिगुणिताः सप्त ॥२१॥
अष्टौ तु जानुमध्ये वैपुल्यं त्र्यष्टकं तु परिणाहः।
विपुलौ चतुर्दशोरू मध्ये द्विगुणश्च तत्परिधिः ॥२२॥
कटिरष्टादश विपुला चत्वारिंशच्चतुर्युता परिधौ।
अङ्गुलमेकं नाभी वेधेन तथा प्रमाणेन ॥२३॥
चत्वारिंशद् द्वियुता नाभीमध्येन मध्यपरिणाहः।
स्तनयोः षोडश चान्तरमूर्ध्वं कक्ष्ये षडङ्गुलिके ॥२४॥
अष्टावंसौ द्वादश बाहूकाय्यौ तथा प्रबाहू च।
बाहू षड्विस्तीर्णौ प्रतिबाहू त्वङ्गुलचतुष्कम् ॥२५॥
षोडश बाहुमूले परिणाहाद् द्वादशाग्रहस्ते च।
विस्तारेण करतलं षडङ्गुलं सप्त दैर्घ्येण ॥२६॥
पञ्चाङ्गुलानि मध्या प्रदेशिनी मध्यपर्वदलहीना।
अनया तुल्या चानामिका कनिष्ठा तु पर्वोना ॥२७॥
पर्वद्वयमङ्गुष्ठः शेषाङ्गुल्यस्त्रिभिस्त्रिभिः कार्य्याः।
नखपरिमाणं कार्य्यं सर्वासां पर्वणोऽर्धेन ॥२८॥
देशानुरूपभूषणवेषालङ्कारमूर्त्तिभिः कार्य्या।
प्रतिमा लक्षणयुक्ता सन्निहिता वृद्धिदा भवति ॥२९॥

दशरथतनयो रामो बलिश्च वैरोचनिः शतं विंशम्।
द्वादशहान्याशेषाः प्रवरसमन्यूनपरिमाणाः ॥३०॥
काय्योंऽष्टभुजो भगवांश्चतुर्भुजो द्विभुज एव वा विष्णुः।
श्रीवत्साङ्कितवक्षाः कौस्तुभमणिभूषितोरस्कः ॥३१॥
अतसीकुसुमश्यामः पीताम्बरनिवसनः प्रसन्नमुखः।
कुण्डलकिरीटधारी पीनगलोरःस्थलांसभुजः ॥३२॥
खड्गगदाशरपाणिर्दक्षिणतः शान्तिदश्चतुर्थकरः।
वामकरेषु च कार्मुकखेटकचक्राणि शङ्खश्च ॥३३॥
अथ च चतुर्भुजमिच्छति शान्तिद एको गदाधरश्चान्यः।
दक्षिणपार्श्वे त्वेवं वामे शङ्खश्च चक्रं च ॥३४॥
द्विभुजस्य तु शान्तिकरो दक्षिणहस्तोऽपरश्च शङ्खधरः।
एवं विष्णोः प्रतिमा कर्त्तव्याः भुतिमिच्छद्भिः ॥३५॥
बलदेवो हलपाणिर्मदविभ्रमलोचनश्च कर्त्तव्यः।
बिभ्रत् कुण्डलमेकं शङ्खेन्दुमृणालगौरतनुः ॥३६॥
एकानंशा कार्य्या देवी बलदेवकृष्णयोर्मध्ये।
कटिसंस्थितवामकरा सरोजमितरेण चोद्वहती ॥३७॥
कार्य्या चतुर्भुजा या वामकराभ्यां सपुस्तकं कमलम्।
द्वाभ्यां दक्षिणपार्श्वे वरमक्षिष्वक्षसूत्रं च ॥३८॥
वामेऽथाष्टभुजायाः कमण्डलुश्चापमम्बुजं शास्त्रम्।
वरशरदर्पणयुक्ताः सव्यभुजाः साक्षसूत्राश्च ॥३९॥
शाम्बश्च गदाहस्तः प्रद्युम्नश्चापभृत् सुरूपश्च।
अनयोः स्त्रियौ च कार्य्ये खेटकनिस्त्रिंशधारिण्यौ ॥४०॥
ब्रह्मा कमण्डलुकरश्चतुर्मुखः पङ्कजासनस्थश्च।
स्कन्दः कुमाररूपः शक्तिधरो वर्हिकेतुश्च ॥४१॥
शुक्लश्चतुर्विषाणो द्विपो महेन्द्रस्य वज्रपाणित्वम्।
तिर्य्यग्ललाटसंस्थं तृतीयमपि लोचनं चिह्नम् ॥४२॥
शम्भोः शिरसीन्दुकला वृषध्वजोऽक्षि च तृतीयमपि चोर्ध्वम्।
शूलं धनुः पिनाकं वामार्धे वा गिरिसुतार्धम् ॥४३॥
पद्माङ्कितकरचरणः प्रसन्नमूर्त्तिः सुनीच केशश्च।
पद्मासनोपविष्टः पितेव जगतो भवति बुद्धः ॥४४॥
आजानुलम्बबाहुः श्रीवत्साङ्कः प्रशान्तमूर्त्तिश्च।
दिग्वासास्तरुणो रूपवांश्च कार्य्योर्हतां देवः ॥४५॥
नासाललाटजङ्घोरुगण्डवक्षांसि चोन्नतानि रवेः।
कुर्य्यादुदीच्यवेषं गूढं पादादुरो यावत् ॥४६॥

विभ्राण: स्वकररुहे बाहुभ्यां पङ्कजे मुकुटधारी।
कुण्डलभूषितवदन: प्रलम्बहारी वियद्गवृत: ॥४७॥
कमलोदरद्युतिमुख: कञ्चुकगुप्त:स्मितप्रसन्नमुख:।
रत्नोज्ज्वलप्रभामण्डलश्च कर्त्तु: शुभकरोऽर्क: ॥४८॥
सौम्या तु हस्तमात्रा वसुदा हस्तद्वयोच्छ्रिता प्रतिमा।
क्षेमसुभिक्षाय भवेत् त्रिचतुर्हस्तप्रमाणा या ॥४९॥
नृपभयमत्यङ्गायां हीनाङ्गायामकल्यता कर्त्तु:।
शातोदर्य्यां क्षुद्भयमर्थविनाश: कृशाङ्गायाम् ॥५०॥
मरणं तु सक्षतायां शस्त्रनिपातेन निर्दिशेत् कर्त्तु:।
वामावनता पत्नीं दक्षिणविनता हिनस्त्यायु: ॥५१॥
अन्धत्वमूर्ध्वदृष्ट्या करोति चिन्तामधोमुखी दृष्टि:।
सर्वप्रतिमास्वेवं शुभाशुभं भास्करोक्तसमम् ॥५२॥
लिङ्गस्य वृत्तपरिधिं दैर्घ्येणासूत्र्य तत् त्रिधा विभजेत्।
मूले तच्चतुरस्रं मध्ये त्वष्टाश्रि वृत्तमत: ॥५३॥
चतुरस्रमवनिखाते कार्य्यं तु पिण्डिकाश्वभ्रे।
दृश्योच्छ्रायेण समा समन्तत: पिण्डिकाश्वभ्रात् ॥५४॥
कृशदीर्घं देशघ्नं पार्श्वविहीनं पुरस्य नाशाय।
यस्य क्षतं भवेन्मस्तके विनाशाय तल्लिङ्गम् ॥५५॥
मातृगण: कर्त्तव्य: स्वनामदेवानुरूपकृतचिह्न:।
रेबुन्तोऽश्वारूढो मृगयाक्रीडादिपरिवार: ॥५६॥
दण्डी यमो महिषगोहंसारूढश्च पाशभृद्वरुण:।
नरवाहन: कुबेरो वामकिरीटी वृहत् कुक्षि: ॥५७॥
(प्रमथाधिप गजमुख: प्रलम्बजठर: कुठारधारी स्यात्।
एकविषाणो विभ्रन्मूलककन्दं सुनीलदलकन्दम् ॥५८॥)

Translation with Notes

1-4 : A very fine mote visible in the sunbeam filtering through a lattice is known as *paramāṇu*, and it is the first (the lowest unit) in all measurements. A *rajas* (a speck of dust) is made up of eight such *paramāṇus*; a *bālāgra* (the tip of one single hair), a *likṣā* (the egg of a louse), a *yuka* (a louse), a *yava* (barley-corn), and an *aṅgula* are each made up of eight units of its preceding object, a *bālāgra* measuring the same as eight particles of dust. The height of the pedestal of the image should be three

parts of the height of the shrine-door less the eighth part, when the latter is divided into eight parts, and the height of the image should be twice that of the pedestal. The face (of an image) should be twelve (*aṅgulas*) wide and long according to its own *aṅgula*; but Nagnajit says that the (face) length is fourteen (*aṅgulas*), and it is the Drāviḍa (type of measurement).

5 : The nose, forehead, chin, neck, ears are all 4 *aṅgulas* (in length); the jaws are 2 *aṅgulas* each (in width) and the chin is 2 *aṅgulas* wide.[1]

6 : The forehead is 8 *aṅgulas* in its width; the temples on each side are 2 *aṅgulas* further off from it, their (downward, *i.e.*, lengthwise) measurement being 4 *aṅgulas*.[2] The ears are each 2 *aṅgulas* in width.

7 : The upper margin of the ear should be made in the same line with the eye-brow and should be 4½ *aṅgulas* distant (from the latter); the ear-hole and the raised part near it are in the same line with the extreme corner of the eye.[3]

8 : Vasiṣṭha says that (the space) between the extreme corner of the eye and ear-hole (near it) is 4 *aṅgulas*.[4] The lower lip is 1 *aṅgula* wide, the upper being its half.

9 : The *gocchā* (*goji*, i.e., the short dimple between the centre of the upper lip and the nasal septum) is ½ *aṅgula* (in width), the mouth being 4 *aṅgulas* in length. When the latter is closed, it is 1½ *aṅgulas* in width, it being 3 *aṅgulas* wide (in the middle), when open.

[1] In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (1. 3), the words *uttarāhanu* and *adharāhanu* occur in the sense of upper and lower jaws respectively. Utpala comments on the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* passage as *hanunī dve dve aṅgule ca vistṛte | Mukhagalasandhī hanunī*. So, according to him, 'the place where the face and the neck join is the *hanu*'; Rao translates the word as chin in his *Tālamāna*, p. 77.

[2] The *śaṅkhas*, i.e., the temples are 4 *aṅgulas* when taken downwards. Utpala comments on the passage thus : *Śaṅkhau caturaṅgulāvadhobhāgau dirghau kāryau yataḥ śaṅkhādho gaṇḍabhāga ucyate.*

[3] Utpala says that the raised tip of flesh near the ear-hole is in the same line with the rheum of the eye; his words are: *Sukumārakaṃ ca karṇaśrotaḥsamīpe unnato mārgastannetraprabandhasamam |...Netraprabandhaśabdena pradūṣikocyate.* Kern wrongly quotes the last part of this commentary as *pramūṣikocyate* (*J.R.A.S.*, 1878, p. 324 and n. 1).

[4] Vasiṣṭha as quoted by Utpala: *Karṇanetrāntaraṃ yacca tadvindyāccaturaṅgulam.* There is a slip in Kern's translation of the line in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; he puts 'the space between the extreme eye-corners and eyes, at 4 digits' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1878, p. 324).

10 : The nostrils are 2 *aṅgulas* in extent; at their end rises the nose 2 *aṅgulas* in height. The intervening space between the two eyes is 4 *aṅgulas*.[1]

11 : The sockets of the eyes and the eyes measure 2 *aṅgulas*, the ball of the eyes being $\frac{1}{3}$ of the same. The vision of the pupil is $\frac{1}{3}$ (of the ball) and the aperture of the eye is 1 *aṅgula*.[2]

12 : The line of the eye-brows (extending from one extremity to the other) measures 10 *aṅgulas*, its width being only $\frac{1}{2}$ an *aṅgula*. (The interstice) between the two eye-brows (not their line) is 2 *aṅgulas*, (each) brow being 4 *aṅgulas* in length.

13 : The hair-line (*i.e.*, the line on the forehead from which the hair begins to sprout upward) should be made equal in extent to (the length of) the joint eye-brows (*i.e.*, 10 *aṅgulas*), its thickness being $\frac{1}{2}$ an *aṅgula*. At the end of the eyes must be delineated *karavīraka* (i.e., the inner corner) 1 *aṅgula* in *measurement*.[3]

14 : The head is 32 *aṅgulas* in circumference and 14 in its extent (apparent width). In pictorial representations, 12 *aṅgulas* (only of the 32) are shown, 20 *aṅgulas* invisible.[4]

15 : The face along with the full complement of the hair make up 16 *aṅgulas* in length, as it is said by Nagnajit.[5] The neck is 10 *aṅgulas* wide, and 21 *aṅgulas* in circumference.

[1] This evidently refers to the space between the two pupils, not the insidc corners of the eyes; the distance between the latter is 1 *aṅgula* (*netrāntare 'ṅgule jñeyo, Pratimālakṣaṇam*, v. 10).

[2] Utpala explains *dṛktārā* as *madhyavarttinī kumārī*. Kern remarks that ' this is right if we take *kumārī* or *kanīnikā* in the sense of the pupil's innermost part, *cf.* Suśruta, ii, p. 303.' He further says that ' it must be taken into account that the vision in the pupil requires a larger measure i.. sculpture than in nature ', *J.R.A.S.*, 1873, p. 324, f. n. 2.

[3] Utpala says *karavīrakaṃ dūṣiketi prasiddham*. But Kern remarks that ' the inner corner, *karavīraka* is also called *mūshika* in a quotation from Kāśyapa ' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1873, p. 325, f. n. 1); but evidently *duṣika* is the correct form.

[4] This is interesting. In pictures only the front of the head is shown, the deity being represented frontally. But in relievo representations, greater or lesser section of the girth of the head is to be shown, according to the nature of the relief. In sculptures fully in the round, however, the whole of the periphery is to be shown.

[5] Utpala comments: *Mukhaṃ dīrghaṃ caturdaśāṅgulāni keśarekhā dve aṅgule evaṃ ṣoḍaśa | Tathā ca Nagnajit | Dvyaṅgulā keśarekhaivaṃ mukhaṃ syat ṣoḍaśāṅgulam ||*

16 : From the throat (the lower-most part of it) down to the heart, it is 12 *aṅgulas;* from the heart to the navel, it is the same; equal in length is the space between the centre of the navel and the penis (*viz.*, the root of the penis).

17 : The thighs measure 24 according to the *aṅgula* measurement; the shanks measure also the same. The knee-caps are 4 *aṅgulas* and the feet are the same (in height);[1] the great toes are 3 *aṅgulas* long, and 5 *aṅgulas* in circumference.

18 : The feet are 12 *aṅgulas* in length and 6 in breadth: The second toe is (also) 3 *aṅgulas* long.

19 : The rest of the toes should be made less by one-eighth, in succession. It is said that the height (elevation) of the great toe is $1\frac{1}{4}$ *aṅgula*.

20 : Those well-versed in the knowledge (of *pratimā-lakṣaṇa*) say that the nail of the great toe is $\frac{3}{4}$ *aṅgula;* the nails of the other toes are less by $\frac{1}{2}$ *aṅgula* in succession, or a little less.

21 : The circumference of the extreme top of the shanks is said to be 14 *aṅgulas* long and 5 broad; in its middle, it is 7 *aṅgulas* wide and 3 times 7 (*i.e.*, 21) in circuit.

22 : The knees in their middle are 8 *aṅgulas* in thickness (width), 3 times 8 (24) being the girth. The thighs in their middle part are 14 *aṅgulas* in width, their circumference being just the double (*i.e.*, 28 *aṅgulas*).

23 : The hip is 18 *aṅgulas* wide and 44 in circumference. The navel is 1 *aṅgula* in depth as well as in extent.

24 : The circumference of the middle (part of the body) at the centre of the navel is 42 *aṅgulas*. The intervening space between the paps is 16 *aṅgulas;* 6 such higher up (in an oblique direction) are the arm-pits.[2]

[1] *Jānukapiccha* is explained by Utpala as the same as *ekkalaka* (?) as is well known to the people (*jānukapicche...ye ca loke ekkalake iti prasiddhe*). Kern's quotation from the commentator is faulty; he writes, ' *jānukapitthe* (sic.) *ye loke cakkalike iti prasiddhe*. This *cakkalikam* or *cakkalikā* looks like a Prākṛt form of the diminutive of *cakra*, ' disc'. He translates the word as ' insteps '; but evidently the author refers to the measurement of the knee-cap or the patella.

[2] Utpala expressly tells us ' *Stanayorūrdhvaṃ tiryak kṛtvā ṣaḍaṅgulike kakṣye kāryc* '.

25 : The shoulders should be made 8 *aṅgulas*, the upper arms as well as the forearms 12 (in length); the upper arm is 6 *aṅgulas* in width and the lower arm 4.

26 : The circumference of the arms at their upper end is 16 *aṅgulas*, the same at the wrist (*agrahasta* explained by Utpala as *prakoṣṭhapradeśa*) being 12. The palm is 6 *aṅgulas* broad and 7 long.

27 : The middle finger is 5 *aṅgulas* (long), the forefinger is half a joint (or digit) smaller; the ring-finger is like the latter, and the little finger is less than the ring-finger by a whole digit.

28 : The thumb has 2 digits, the remaining fingers should be made with 3 each. The measure of a nail is the same as one-half the joints of each finger.

29 : ' An image should be represented in such a way that its equipment, dress, ornaments and outward form be in agreement with the country. By possessing the required characteristics an idol, by its very presence, bestows prosperity (Kern).

30 : (The images of) Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, and Bali, the son of Virocana, (should measure) 120 (*aṅgulas*); (the rest, the three other groups of images), each measuring 12 (*aṅgulas*) less than its preceding one, should constitute respectively the chief, the middling and the lowest (variety;—*pravara*, *sama* and *nyūna* being 108, 96 and 84 *aṅgulas* in their respective measurements of height).

31-5 : The worshipful god Viṣṇu may be represented either as eight-armed, four-armed and two-armed; his breast should be marked with (the auspicious sign) *Śrīvatsa*, and be adorned with *Kaustubha* gem. He should be yellowish green in colour like the lin blossom, be clad in a yellow garment, and should have a serene expression; he should wear ear-rings and a topped crown (*kirīṭa*), and his neck, chest, shoulders and arms should be thick (*i.e.*, full and fleshy). (The eight-armed god) should show in his right hands a sword, a mace, an arrow and *abhayamudrā*, while his left hands should hold a bow, a shield, a discus and a conch-shell. If one wishes (to make him) four-armed, his right hands should show an *abhayamudrā* and a mace, while his left hands should hold a conch-shell and a discus. The

right hand of the two-armed god is in the *abhaya* pose, the left one holding a conch-shell; in this manner the image of Viṣṇu should be made by those who desire prosperity.

36 : Baladeva should hold a ploughshare in his hand, and his eyes should be made rolling (unsteady, through excessive) drink; he should wear a single ear-ring, and his complexion should be fair like a conch-shell, the moon or a lotus stalk.

37-9 : The goddess Ekānaṃśā should be made between Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa; her left hand should rest on her hip, while the other (*i.e.*, the right hand) should hold a lotus. If she is to be made four-armed, then a book and a lotus are to be placed in her left hands, while on the right she is to confer a boon on the supplicants with one hand, her other hand holding a rosary. An eight-armed Ekānaṃśā should hold in her left hands a water-vessel, a bow, a lotus and a book, her right hands showing a *varadamudrā*, an arrow, a mirror and a rosary.

40 : Śāmba is shown with a mace in his hand, and handsome Pradyumna holds a bow; their wives should be made (placed by their side) holding a shield and a sword.

41 : Brahmā is four-faced, seated on a lotus-seat holding a water-vessel in (one of his) hands. Skanda looks boy-like, holds a spear and has a peacock for his ensign.

42 : Indra has a white four-tusked elephant (for his mount) and a thunderbolt in his hand; another cognisance is his third eye placed horizontally on his forehead.

43 : Śiva has a crescent on his head, a bull for ensign, and a third eye shown vertically (on his forehead); his two hands (should hold) a trident and a bow named *pināka*, or his left side may consist of the half-part of the daughter of the mountain (Pārvatī; Utpala describes this type of Śiva image as Ardha-gaurīśvara which is the same as Ardhanārīśvara).

44 : Buddha, as if he were the father of mankind, should be represented with a placid countenance, seated on a lotus seat, with the palms and soles bearing lotus marks and very short hair (*sunīca-keśaḥ*; a variant reading is *sunītakeśāḥ* which would mean ' well-arranged,'—perhaps referring to the ' short curls on the Buddha-head turning from left to right, *dakṣiṇāvartamūrdhaja*, a characteristic sign of Buddha).

45 : The god of the Arhats (the Jainas; *i.e.*, any of the 24 Tīrthaṃkaras) should be shown nude young and beautiful in appearance, with a tranquil expression and arms reaching down to the knees; his breast should have the (auspicious) *Śrīvatsa* mark.

46-8 : The nose, forehead, lower leg, thigh, cheek and breast of the Sun god should be raised (tall, full and fleshy); the god should be clad in the dress of the Northerners, (his body in this way) being covered from the feet up to the breast. Wearing a crown he shqould hold two lotus flowers by their stalks; his face should be adorned with ear-rings, he should have a long necklace and a girdle (*viyaṅga, the* Sanskritised form of the Iranian *aiwiyaonghen*) round his waist. Sun god when made with a body covered by a corslet, a complexion fair like the inside of the white water-lily, a smiling and placid face, and a halo brilliant on account of the gems, bestows good to his maker.

49-52 : An image (of Sūrya which is one cubit high is beneficial; one measuring two cubits in height brings wealth, and images of three and four cubits promote peace and abundance respectively. Such a Sūrya image, if endowed with excessive limbs bodes peril from the monarch for its maker, as one with undersized limbs causes infirmity to him; one with a thin belly or another that is lean brings danger from famine or loss of wealth. One having abrasion on its body indicates the maker's death by the sword; a Sun image leaning to the left destroys the maker's wife, as one bending to the right, his life. Such an image if its eyes are turned upwards causes blindness, and if its eyes are downcast brings anxiety; these good and evil tokens, as told in respect to the Sun god's image, are applicable to the images (of other deities).

53-4 : The periphery of the circular (*i.e.*, the topmost) portion of the Śivaliṅga being measured lengthwise, it (the whole of the shaft) should be divided into three parts; the lowermost part should be square, the middle part octagonal and the rest (*i.e.*, the topmost part) cylindrical. The square section (should be put) into the hole in the ground, the middle one into the hole (cut in) the pedestal, and the height of the visible (*i.e.*, the topmost cylindrical) section from the pedestal-hole should be

equal to its periphery (Utpala's commentary on a part of this passage seems to me to be a bit confused; thus his comment *svabhrāt pīṭhavivarāt samantataḥ sarvāsu dikṣu pīṭhikā dṛśyocchrāyeṇa samā kāryyā*, etc. on the last line of verse 54 is not quite clear).

55 : A Śivaliṅga which is lean and (disproportionately) long brings devastation to the country (of its origin), and one which is shorn of its sides causes destruction to the town; one on the top of which is a hole brings ruin (to the master).

56 : The Mothers (Divine Mothers) should be made with the forms and cognisances of the individual gods whom they are named after; Revanta should be riding on horseback with attendants engaged in the sport of hunting.

57 : Yama with a club in his hand rides on a buffalo; Varuṇa holding a noose rides on a swan. Kubera riding on a man is pot-bellied and wears a crown (placed aslant) on the left (of his head).

[58 : The lord of the Pramathas (*i.e.*, Gaṇeśa), elephant-faced and pot-bellied, should hold a hatchet (in his hand); one-toothed, he should (also) hold the green root of a radish.][1]

[1] This couplet is not found in most of the manuscripts of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; Kern suggests that it is an interpolation, though he includes it within parenthesis in Chapter 58 of his edition (Sudhakar Dvivedi leaves it out). Utpala who quotes a long extract from Kāśyapa in the end of his commentary on the Chapter on Pratimālakṣaṇam (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57 in Dvidedi's Edition, and Ch. 58 in the Bibliotheca Indica Edition by Kern) begins it with a couplet describing an image of Gaṇapati in this manner: *Ekadaṃṣṭro gajamukhaścaturbāhur Vināyakaḥ | Lambodaraḥ sthūladeho netratrayavibhūṣiiaḥ*. The extract from Kāśyapa then contains the descriptions of the images of Vitastā (she is described in only one manuscript probably copied in Kashmir), Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Narasiṃha, Varāha, Śiva, Caṇḍikā, Skanda, Sūrya, Airāvata, Indra and Śacī with some observations on images in general.

The first 28 verses of this chapter from *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* deal with iconometry. They appear to deal mainly with images measuring 108 *aṅgulas*, incidentally referring to a few which measure 120 *aṅgulas*. The *Pratimānalakṣaṇam* text which is being edited next with translation and notes is a representative specimen of similar texts of the later period. It gives us many varieties of measurement in respect of images such as *navatāla, aṣṭatāla, saptatāla*, etc. It must be noted, however, that it gives the honour of precedence only to the *navatāla* images, *i.e.*, those which measure 108 in terms of their own *aṅgula* (*svairaṅgula pramāṇaiḥ*).

APPENDIX B

Part II

प्रतिमामानलक्षणम्

नमो बुद्धाय ॥

आत्रेयतिलके बौद्धशास्त्रेऽन्यत्र पुरातने ।
उक्तं यत्पूर्वमुनिभिः प्रतिमामानलक्षणम् ॥१॥
तत्संहृत्येह चैकत्र पिण्डीकृत्य यथाक्रमम् ।
नत्वा सर्वविदं देवमर्च्चालक्षणमुच्यते ॥२॥
द्वादशाङ्गुलि तालञ्च वितस्तिर्मुखमेव च ।
ज्ञेयमेवार्थनामेन द्वयङ्गुलं गोलकं कला ॥३॥
पल्लवानां चतुर्भागो मापनाङ्गुलिका स्मृता ।
ततोऽङ्गुलाष्टभागेन यवं विन्द्याद्विचक्षणः ॥४॥
अर्च्चानामङ्गप्रत्यङ्गं मापनार्थमिति स्मृतम् ।
अननव विधानेन मापयेत्प्रतिमां बुधः ॥५॥
यत्किञ्चिद्रूपकायामं विभाज्य नवभागतः ।
एकतालं मुखं कुर्य्याद्विस्तारञ्च तथैव च ॥६॥
वकाराकृति चूताभं (मुखं) खगाण्डाभं तिलाकृति ।
सार्द्धाङ्गुलविहीनं यत्तद्वकाराकृतीष्यते ॥७॥
द्वयङ्गुलेन विहीने तु चूताभमाननं भवेत् ।
सार्द्धद्वयङ्गुलहीनन्तु खगाण्डाकारमुच्यते ॥८॥
वर्जयत्त्र्यङ्गुलं यत्तु नामधेयं तिलाकृति ।
चतुर्णामपि वक्त्राणां कपोलेषु विवर्जयत् ॥९॥
केवलं तिलसंस्थानं नारीणामिष्यते मुखम् ।
अशास्त्रण मुखं कृत्वा यजमानो विनश्यति ॥१०॥
सशास्त्रण मुखं कृत्वा वर्द्धते सह बान्धवैः ।
सर्वशास्त्रागमं कृत्वा अर्चानां कारयेद्बुधः ॥११॥
द्विगोलं शीर्षभागञ्च छत्राकारं प्रयोजयेत् ।
अङ्गुलार्द्धं द्विगोलञ्च ललाटं परिकीर्त्तितम् ॥१२॥
तिर्य्यक्त्वं च ललाटस्य नियतं पञ्चगोलकम् ।
द्विकलो द्वियवश्चैव नासिकायाम उच्यते ॥१३॥
द्वियवश्चाग्रविस्तारो निष्कासं सार्द्धमङ्गुलम् ।
द्वयङ्गुलं पार्श्वयोरूर्द्धं नासावय (नासावंश) यवत्रयम् ॥१४॥

अर्द्धाङ्गुलिसमे वृत्ते वंशमूले यवद्वयम् ।
स्रोतसी त्रियवे स्यातां शङ्खाकृति सुशोभना ॥१५॥
इति मानसमायुक्ता जिह्वापिण्डी प्रशस्यते ।
तिलपुष्पसमाकाशशुकश्येनमुखोपमा ॥१६॥
त्र्यङ्गुलं द्वियवं तस्या अधोभागं प्रचक्षते ।
षड्यवं भोजकं कुर्य्यादुत्तरोष्ठं चतुर्यवम् ॥१७॥
त्रिभागाङ्गुलिका कार्य्या गोजी तस्योपरि स्थिता ।
अप(ध)रं भोजकं तुल्यं विस्तारमङ्गुलद्वयम् ॥१८॥
निष्कासं षड्यवं मध्ये बिम्बरेखाञ्च कारयत् ।
सृक्कणीं चाङ्गुलार्द्धेन किञ्चिन्निम्नान्तु कारयेत् ॥१९॥
द्वयङ्गुलं चिबुकं तिर्य्यगायामेन यवा दश ।
अर्द्धाङ्गुलं भ्रुवोर्मध्ये दीर्घं पञ्चाङ्गुलं भवेत् ॥२०॥
यवार्द्धमाना भ्रूरेखा चापाकृतिरखण्डिता ।
द्वयङ्गुलं द्वियवं नेत्रमायतन्तु त्रिभागतः ॥२१॥
लोचनस्य त्रयोभागं तथा तारं प्रकीर्त्तितम् ।
तस्य भागत्रयं कुर्य्यादसितं सम्प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥२२॥
कुमुदोत्पलपत्राभं पद्मपत्रं ज्यसो (झषो) दरम् ।
अपाङ्गे द्वे कले ज्ञेये नेत्रमध्यञ्च द्वयङ्गुलम् ॥२३॥
कर्णा द्वयङ्गुलविस्तारौ दीर्घन्तु चतुरङ्गुलम् ।
पृष्ठतः कर्णनिष्कासं द्वयङ्गुलं परिकीर्त्तितम् ॥२४॥
त्रुटिका द्वयङ्गुलं सम्यक् तदर्द्धा ककुनी (?) भवेत् ।
अङ्गुलस्य चतुर्थांशः कर्णवर्त्या(कर्णावर्त)स्तु विस्तरः ॥२५॥
त्रियवं कर्णयोर्गुह्यं यथाशोभा च पार्ष्णिका ।
कर्तरीमूलसंस्थानं कर्णनालम्प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥२६॥
कर्णयोरुभयोर्मध्ये मस्तकोऽष्टादशाङ्गुलः ।
चतुर्दशाङ्गुलं पृष्ठं ललाटस्य न संशयः ॥२७॥
भ्रूरेखा नेत्रयोर्मध्ये गोलकं परिकीर्त्तितम् ।
अष्टाङ्गुलं भवेन्मध्यं चिबुकाकर्णमूलयोः ॥२८॥
तथा चिबुललाटञ्च कर्त्तव्यं नेत्रयोः समम् ।
सृक्कणी तारकापार्श्वे समसूत्रेण मापयेत् ॥२९॥
भ्रूरेखा कर्णशीर्षञ्च समसूत्रेण ताडयेत् ।
त्रुटिका नत्रमध्यञ्च तथैव समताडनम् ॥३०॥
द्विगोलं मुखनिष्कासं ग्रीवायामस्तथैव च ।
स्कन्धमूलाच्छ्रुतेर्मूलं यावत्स्याद्गोलकत्रयम् ॥३१॥

चिबुकाधो यथाशोभं कर्त्तव्यं मांसवर्तनम् ।
तदालम्बप्रमाणन गृहिणीह्रासयेन्मुखम् ॥३२॥
मौलिकोऽथ जटाबन्धः कुञ्चितो वा शिरोरुहः ।
किरीटी त्रिशिखञ्चैव मुकुटं खण्डमेव च ॥३३॥
तेषामष्टाङ्गुलं दीर्घं कर्तव्यं नाधिकं ततः ।
मुखाकारं प्रवक्ष्यामि शुभं वा यदि वाऽशुभम् ॥३४॥
किञ्चित्प्रहसितं कुर्य्यान्माधुर्य्यं लवणा(लक्षणा)न्वितम् ।
कषायं कटुकं क्रुद्धं आम्लं तिक्तकमेव च ॥३५॥
वक्त्रं वेद न संस्थानं दूरतः परिवर्जयेत् ।
अतःपरम्प्रवक्ष्यामि देहानाम् मानलक्षणम् ॥३६॥
हिक्कातो नाभिपर्य्यन्तं द्विमुखं कारयेद्बुधः ।
नाभितो वृषणमूलं तिर्य्यक्पार्श्वौ स्फिचौ तथा ॥३७॥
हिक्काचुचुकयोर्मध्ये चुचुकान्तरमेव च ।
ग्रीवापार्श्वाङ्गुशीर्षं तालमेकं प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥३८॥
नाभिचुचुकयोर्मध्ये भागश्चतुर्दशाङ्गुलम् ।
समसूत्रञ्च कर्त्तव्यं हिक्का चाङ्गा(चांसा)ग्रमेव च ।
अंसयोर्मध्यविस्तारस्त्रितालः समुदाहृतः ॥३९॥
कक्षं षडङ्गुलं कुर्य्यात्तथा कक्षस्तनान्तरम् ।
एकगोलप्रमाणञ्च चूचूकापार्श्वमण्डलम् ॥४०॥
द्वियवं चूचूकं वृत्तं त्रियवं नाभिमण्डलम् ।
निम्ननाभिश्च कर्तव्या दक्षिणावर्तलाञ्छना ॥४१॥
त्र्यङ्गुलौ वृषणौ स्यातां मेढ्रन्तु चतुरङ्गुलम् ।
स्फिचावष्टाङ्गुलादूर्द्धं पीनवृत्तौ सुशोभनौ ॥४२॥
भुजायामं प्रशंसन्ति तज्ज्ञामुखं चतुष्टयम् ।
बाहू चाष्टकलौ स्यातां प्रबाहू नवगोलकौ ॥४३॥
त्रिगोलं करदीर्घन्तु तावती मध्यमाङ्गुलिः ।
कुर्य्याद्विगोलमङ्गुष्ठं तत्तुल्या च कनीयसी ॥४४॥
मध्यमाया नखार्द्धेन हीना चानामिकाङ्गुलिः ।
हीना नखेन विज्ञेया मध्यमस्य प्रदेशिनी ॥४५॥
अङ्गुष्ठस्य तु विस्तारं कल्पयेत्तु यवा नव ।
सार्द्धमष्टयवं तिर्य्यङ् मध्यमायाश्च योजयेत् ॥४६॥
उभौ चाष्टयवं कृत्वा सप्तयवा कनीयसी ।
कनिष्ठामूलतो बन्धोः मणेः पञ्चाङ्गुलम्मतम् ॥४७॥
तत्प्रमाणेन जानीयात्तिर्य्यक्करतलस्य तु ।
अङ्गुष्ठमूलतो बन्धमणेर्यावद्विगोलकम् ॥४८॥

अङ्गुष्ठमूली(?मूलात्) तर्जन्या मूलं सार्द्धकलं कलेत् ।
अङ्गुल्यस्तास्त्रिपर्वाः स्युर्द्विपर्वोऽङ्गुष्ठको भवेत् ॥४९॥
अङ्गुष्ठस्याङ्गुलीनाञ्च समपर्वो विधीयते ।
सुवर्तिताग्रसूक्ष्माश्च सुसन्धीश्च प्रयोजयेत् ॥५०॥
स्वाङ्गुलार्द्धं नखं तिर्य्यक् पर्वार्द्धदीर्घमेव च ।
मूलेऽर्द्धचन्द्रसंयुक्तं करजं कारयेद्बुधः ॥५१॥
पाणिं पञ्चाङ्गुलं कुर्य्यात्तत्पार्श्वमङ्गुलद्वयम् ।
पूर्णं करतलं कुर्य्याच्छुभरेखोपशोभितम् ॥५२॥
हस्तरेखां प्रवक्ष्यामि देवानां शुभलक्षणम् ।
शङ्खं पद्मं ध्वजं वज्रं चक्रं स्वस्तिककुण्डलम् ॥५३॥
कलशं शशिनक्षत्रं श्रीवत्साङ्कुशमेव च ।
त्रिशूलं यव(जप)मालाश्च कुर्वीत वसुधां तथा ॥५४॥
नाभिगुह्यकयोर्मध्य नोरुमूलं समं कलेत् ।
द्वितस्त्युरुदीर्घत्वं जङ्घादीर्घं मुखद्वयम् ॥५५॥
जानुनी द्विकलौ स्यातां गुल्फावेककलौ स्मृतौ ।
द्विकलौ पार्ष्णिकौ ज्ञेयौ पक्वबिम्बफलाकृति ॥५६॥
अंह्र (अंघ्रि) सप्ताङ्गुलं तिर्य्यगायामेन दशाङ्गुलम् ।
चतुर्भागेन पादस्याङ्गुष्ठायामं विधीयते ॥५७॥
तत्समा सूचिका हीना मध्यमा द्वियवेन तु ।
अनामिकानखार्द्धेन हीना पर्वा कनीयसी ॥५८॥
अङ्गुष्ठस्य तु विस्तार एकादश यवा स्मृताः ।
सूच्यङ्गुष्ठकयोरग्र चान्तरं त्रियवं भवेत् ॥५९॥
सूच(ची) नवयवा तिर्य्यक् साद्धा (र्द्धा)ष्टयवमध्यमा ।
अनामाष्टयवा तिर्य्यक्कीर्त्यते मानलक्षणे ॥६०॥
बालचूतकसंस्थाना अङ्गुल्यः परिकीर्त्तिताः ।
कूर्मपृष्ठसमाकारं पादस्योपरि कारयेत् ॥६१॥
जलूकपदसंस्थाना अङ्गुल्यः परिकीर्त्तिताः ।
पादौ समतलौ काय्यौं शुक्त्याकारा नखा स्मृताः ॥६१॥
अतःपरं प्रवक्ष्यामि परिणाहस्य लक्षणम् ।
षट्त्रिंशदङ्गुलं ज्ञेयं शिरसः परिमण्डलम् ।
ग्रीवाष्टाङ्गुलिविस्तारत्रिगुणं परिमण्डलम् ॥६३॥
कक्षयोर्मध्यविस्तारो विंशत्यङ्गुलिरत्र तु ।
ऊनविंशतिकलं कुर्य्यात्परिणाहेन बुद्धिमान् ॥६४॥
भुजयोर्मूलमध्याग्रमष्टषट्चतुरङ्गुलम् ।
स्वविस्तारप्रमाणेन मण्डलं त्रिगुणं भवेत् ॥६५॥

कुक्षेश्च मध्यविस्तारो ज्ञेयः पञ्चदशाङ्गुलः।
षोडशाङ्गुलिरस्याधः कटिरष्टादशाङ्गुलिः ॥६६॥
षड्गोलमुरुमूले च जङ्घामूले षडङ्गुलिः।
जङ्घान्ते द्विकलं विन्द्याद्विस्तारत्वेन पण्डितः ॥६७॥
एतेषामेव सर्वेषां मण्डलं त्रिगुणं भवेत्।
तथाङ्गुलीनां सर्वेषां वृत्तत्वं यत्र विद्यते ॥६८॥
पृष्ठतः शीर्षनिष्कासं कलमेकं प्रकीर्त्तितम्।
पृष्ठं (पृष्ठ) वंश समं कुर्य्यात् स्फिचौ तुल्यावलम्बिनौ ॥६९॥
उरू च पिण्डिका पार्ष्णिः कुर्य्यात्तुल्यावलम्बिनः।
पृष्ठस्य लक्षणं विन्द्यादेतत् संक्षेपतो द्विजः ॥७०॥
मुक्ताहारादिरसना कटककेयूरकुण्डलम्।
वस्त्रशाटकविन्यासं शरीरस्थञ्च कारयेत् ॥७१॥
अथार्चानां गुणो दोषश्चोच्यतेऽधिकहीनतः।
दीर्घविस्तारसंयुक्तं दद्यात्स्थानन्तु सुस्थिरम् ॥७२॥
शिरश्छत्रसमं कार्यं धनधान्यसमृद्धिदम्।
सुभ्रूरेखा ललाटे च शाश्वती ददतः (ददाति) श्रियम् ॥७३॥
सुकृता सा भवेदर्चा जायते ससुखाः प्रजाः।
कम्बुग्रीवा भवेदर्चा सर्वसिद्धिकरी सदा ॥७४॥
शरीरं सिंहसंस्थानं सुभिक्षं बलवर्द्धनम्।
भूजौ करिकराकारौ सर्वकामार्थसाधकौ ॥७५॥
शस्यसम्पत्करं नित्यं सूदरञ्च सुभिक्षकृत्।
रम्भोरुछागगोवृद्धिर्ग्रामवृद्धि सुपिण्डिका ॥७६॥
सुपादा च भवेदर्चा शीलविद्या प्रसाधका।
इत्यर्चानां प्रशंसोक्ता हीनदोषमथाह च ॥७७॥
दुर्भिक्षो राष्ट्रभङ्गः स्याद्धीना विस्तारदीर्घयोः।
देहहीना भवेत् कुब्जो नासाहीना च रौगिकः ॥७८॥
वामदृष्टियशोनाशमूर्द्धदृष्टिधनक्षयम्।
अल्पाक्षी मण्डलाक्षी च केकराक्षी तथैव च ॥७९॥
हीनदृष्टिरधोदृष्टिर्दूरतः परिवर्जयेत्।
निम्नकुक्षि भवेदर्चा शस्यनाशं सदा भवेत् ॥८०॥
उरुहीना भवेदर्चा गर्भः पतति शाश्वतः।
त्रयो ह्रस्वा महादोषा नासिका नेत्रमङ्गुलिः ॥८१॥
त्रयोदीर्घ (ा) महादोषा जङ्घाग्रीवाचिबुस्तथा।
त्रयः सूक्ष्मा महादोषाः शिरः कर्णश्च नासिका ॥८२॥

त्रयः स्थूला महादोषा सन्धिकुक्षिनखस्तथा।
त्रयो निम्ना महादोषा हस्तौ पादौ च लोचनौ ॥८३॥
त्रयो ह्रस्वा महादोषा ग्रीवासो (ग्रीवांस) भुज एव च।
इति दोषगुणं ज्ञात्वा कर्तव्यार्चा विपश्चिता ॥८४॥
नवतालालक्षणायामपरिणाहा च द्वौ समौ संप्रकीर्त्तिताः।
नववक्त्रो ध्रुवं देव अष्टार्द्धा देवमानुषाः।
मनुष्यमष्टतालञ्च जनन्या चार्द्धसप्तमम् ॥८५॥
मुखं षट्सप्ततालानाम्परिणाहसमुच्छ्रयम्।
कीर्त्तितञ्च यथान्यायमात्रेयलक्षणनिर्मितमिति ॥८६॥
दीर्घ (ं) चाष्टमुखं कृत्वा (कुर्य्यात्) देवीनां लक्षणं बुधः।
मुखं सट्कलं कृत्वा (मुखं च षट्कलं कुर्य्यात्)
देहं चैकादशाकला ॥८७॥
त्रयो ग्रीवस्तञ्चैव अङ्गे चुचमुखान्तरौ
(तिर्य्यग् ग्रीवा स्तनञ्चैव अङ्गं चुचुमुखान्तरम्)
सर्वेते मुखमर्द्धं च देवीनाञ्च विधीयते ॥८८॥
मध्यञ्चाष्टाङ्गुलं कृत्वा (कुर्य्यात्) श्रोणी पञ्चकला स्मृता।
कटी विंशाङ्गुलं कुर्य्यादुरू चैकादशौ कलौ ॥८९॥
जानुनी त्र्यङ्गुलौ चैव पिण्डीका विंशदङ्गुला।
गुल्फं च द्व्यङ्गुलं कुर्य्याद्देवीनां लक्षणं शुभम् ॥९०॥
कृत्वा (कुर्य्यात्) त्रिंशाङ्गुलञ्चैव शिरसि परिमण्डलम्।
पञ्चाङ्गुलं भुजौ मूलं त्रिगुणं मण्डलं भवेत् ॥८१॥
त्र्यङ्गुलं मणिबन्धञ्च मण्डलं स्यात् तथैव च।
ऊरुमध्यकला षड्भिस्त्रिगुणं परिमण्डलम् ॥८२॥
मध्ये पञ्चाङ्गुलं जङ्घामण्डलं त्रिगुणं भवेत्।
सर्वत्र त्रिगुणं कार्य्यमङ्गुलीनां तथैव च ॥९३॥
अपाङ्गलोचनञ्चैव स्तनौ तु कटिरेव च।
ईषन्मानाधिकं कुर्य्यादेतदृष्टिसुखं भवेत् ॥९४॥

इति देवीलक्षणमष्टतालम्।

अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि बालानां मानलक्षणम्।
षड्गुणं बालरूपीणं (पिणः) सेनापत्यञ्च षड्गुणम्
(सेनापतेश्च लक्षणम्) ॥९५॥
विनायकानां यक्षाणां प्रतिमालक्षणं शुभम्।
गोलकं मूर्द्धि विज्ञेया मुखं षड्गोलकस्य तु ॥९६॥

ग्रीवां द्वयङ्गुलां कुर्वीत देहे (हं) विंशाङ्गुलं भवेत्।
अर्द्धगोलकला नाभ्यां खनित्रमङ्गुलं तथा ॥९७॥
उरू सप्तकला कुर्य्याद्गोलकं जानुनी तथा।
पिण्डोकं षट्कलं कुर्य्याद्गुल्फमेकाङ्गुलं स्मृतम् ॥९८॥
पाष्णिकं त्र्यङ्गुलञ्चैव यथावदनुपूर्वशः ।
पादौ पञ्चकलं दीर्घमङ्गुष्ठगोलकं ततः ॥९९॥
सूच्यङ्गुष्ठसमा कुर्य्याद्धीनद्वियवमध्यमा।
नखहीनमनामञ्च पर्वहीना कनीयसी ॥१००॥
अष्टाङ्गुलेन हिक्कासो (हिक्कांस)बाहू चैव नवाङ्गुलम्।
प्रबाहुः पञ्चगोलञ्च करदीर्घं द्विगोलकम् ॥१०१॥
मध्यमाङ्गुल (ं) द्वौ (द्वि) गोलं नखहीना प्रदेशिनी।
मध्यपवनखाहीनं (मध्यमार्द्धनखहीनां) कारयेत्तदनामिका(म्)।
अनामिका पर्वहीना दीर्घाङ्गुष्ठकनीयसा ॥१०२॥
अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि विस्तारेण कलानि च।
द्विकलार्द्धं भवेन्मूर्द्धि त्रिगुणं परिमण्डलम् ॥१०३॥
षट्कलं मुखमध्ये च कर्णनासाग्रमेव च।
त्रिकलं ग्रीवामध्ये च कुक्षौ तु षोडशाङ्गुलम् ॥१०४॥
मध्ये षड्गोलकायस्य (कायस्य षड्गोलं) कटिञ्च सप्तगोलकम्।
उरुमध्ये चतुर्गोलं जानुद्विकल षड्यव(म्) ॥१०५॥
मध्यमं चाङ्गुलं (मध्ये पञ्चाङ्गुलं) जङ्घा गुल्फं त्र्यङ्गुलमेव च।
द्विकलार्द्धाङ्गुलं पादौ विस्तारेण प्रकीर्त्तितम ॥१०६॥
नवयवाङ्गुष्ठकञ्चैव अन्तरं त्रियवं स्मृतम्।
यवाष्टसूचिकं कुर्य्याद् यवसप्त च मध्यमम् ॥१०७॥
यड्यवानामिकात्यस्य (कार्य्या?) यवपञ्च कनीयसी।
एवं कारयते विद्वान् पादाङ्गुलसुशोभनम् ॥१०८॥
त्र्यङ्गुलञ्च तथा पार्ष्णिविस्तरेण प्रकीर्त्तिता।
[अष्ट वाङ्गुष्ठका चैव न(य)वसप्तञ्च मध्यमा ॥१०९॥]

आत्रेयतिलके षड्पलक्षणः ॥

अतःपरम्प्रवक्ष्यामि दशतालस्य लक्षणम्।
ब्राह्मन (ब्रह्मणः) चर्चिकादेवी(व्याः) ऋषीणां
ब्रह्मराक्षसाः (?साम्) ॥११०॥
दिव्यानां चैव बुद्धानां कारयेत्प्रतिमा(मां) शुभाम्।
एतेषां कारयद्विद्वान्नन्ने(नन्ये)षां नैव कारयेत् ॥१११॥

द्विगोलकं भवेच्छि(च्छी)र्षं मुखषड्गोलकमेव च (मुखं षड्गोलमेव च)।
ग्रीवा(ं) द्विगोलकं कुर्य्याद्देहं षड्विंशमङ्गुलम् ॥११२॥
नितम्बं द्विकलं विद्धि कटि पञ्चकलं भवेत्।
षड्विंशाङ्गुलकमूरु जानू पञ्चाङ्गुलौ स्मृतौ ॥११३॥
षड्विंशाङ्गुलकौ जङ्घौ गुल्फौ त्र्यङ्गुलकौ स्मृतौ।
अधोभागाः(गः) प्रकर्त्तव्याः(व्यः) पञ्चाङ्गुलसुसम्मिता(तः) ॥११४॥
बाहुभागाः(गः) प्रकर्त्तव्या(व्यः) अष्टगोलकमेव च।
दशगोलक विज्ञेया प्रबाहुक विपश्चिता ॥११५॥
करपल्लवभागञ्च षट्कलन्तु विजानतु।
एतेषां चैव मानानां कर्त्तव्यं शास्त्रचिन्तकैः ॥११६॥

आत्रेयतिलके दशतालक्षणम् ॥०॥

अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि सप्ततालस्य लक्षणम्।
शिरस्त्र्यङ्गुलविज्ञेयं मुखं षट्कलमेव च ॥११७॥
ग्रीवा त्र्यङ्गुलविज्ञेया कम्बुग्रीवञ्च कारयत्।
ऊर्नविंशाङ्गुलं देव(हं)मानवृत्तसुशोभितम् ॥११८॥
एकाङ्गुलि नितम्बञ्च गोलकं कटिदेशत(क)म्।
ऊर्नविंशाङ्गुलमूरु जानु त्र्यङ्गुलमेव च ॥११९॥
ऊर्नविंशाङ्गुलं जङ्घ(ङ्घा) गुल्फमेकाङ्गुलम्मतम्।
द्वयङ्गुलञ्च अधोभागम्प्रतिमा सप्ततालकम् ॥१२०॥
अष्टाङ्गुलं प्रकर्त्तव्यं हिक्का चांसाग्रमेव च।
बाहु अङ्गुलिविज्ञया एकतालं प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥१२१॥
प्रबाहु सप्तगोलञ्च कर्तव्यं मुनिसत्तमैः।
करपल्लवभागञ्च अष्टाङ्गुल(ं) प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥
मानुषस्य प्रमाणन्तु कर्तव्यं शास्त्रचिन्तकैः ॥१२२॥

आत्रेयतिलके सप्ततालक्षणम् ॥०॥

अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि चतुस्तालस्य लक्षणम्।
एकाङ्गुलिः शिरः कुर्य्यान्मुखं द्वादशमङ्गुलम् ॥१२३॥
ग्रीवा एकाङ्गुलं विद्धि देह द्वादशमङ्गुलम्।
अर्द्धाङ्गुलं नितम्बञ्च कटिमेकाङ्गुलम्मतम् ॥१२४॥
नवाङ्गुलं भवेदुरुर्जानु एकाङ्गुलं स्मृतम्।
जङ्घा नवाङ्गुला ज्ञेया गुल्फमर्द्धाङ्गुलं भवेत् ॥१२५॥
अधोभागाः प्रकर्त्तव्या एकाङ्गुला प्रकीर्तिता।
चतुष्कलञ्च विज्ञेया हिक्का चांसाग्रमेव च ॥१२६॥

बाहु त्रिगोलकं चैव प्रबाहु अष्टमङ्गुलम्।
सप्ताङ्गुलसूतं ज्ञेयमुच्छ्रितं (सप्ताङ्गुलन्तु विज्ञेयमुच्छ्रित)
करपल्लवम् ॥१२७॥
यथाशोभेन विज्ञेया कर्तव्या मांसवर्तनम्।
वामनस्य प्रमाणन्तु कथितं मुनिसत्तमैः ॥१२८॥

आत्रेयतिलके चतुस्तालस्य लक्षणम् ॥०॥

महाप्रतिम(ा)विन्यासं प्रवक्ष्याम्यधुना शृण्।
दशपञ्चाधिकैर्हस्तः प्रतिमा व(क)न्यसी स्मृताः ॥१२९॥
द्विगुणा मध्यमा ज्ञेया ज्येष्ठा तु त्रिगुणाः स्मृताः।
अतःपरन्न कुर्वीत यदीच्छेच्छेयमात्मनः ॥१३०॥

दग्धा जीर्णा च भग्ना च स्फुटिता चापि देवता।
स्थिता वा स्थाप्यमाना वा सदा दोषकरा भवेत् ॥१३१॥
दग्धामर्चा अनावृष्टिर्जीर्णामर्चा धनक्षयम्।
भग्नामर्चा कुले नाशं स्फुटितां युद्धमादिशेत् ॥१३२॥
अर्चा वा यदि वा लिङ्गं देवी मातृगणस्तथा।
शीघ्रमुच्चाटयेदेव विधिदृष्टेन कर्मणा ॥१३३॥
पुष्पार्घञ्च तथा धूपं नैवेद्यबलिमेव च।
दत्त्वा च वाससी चैव होमकर्मसमन्वितः ॥१३४॥
विप्र(घ्न)शान्त्युदकं चैव वेदमन्त्रेण कारयेत्।
बालरज्जुस्तथा मौञ्जी दुकूलक्षोमकस्तथा ॥१३५॥
विधिरेव समुद्दिष्टो रज्जुश्चात्र विधीयते।
वृषस्य ककुदि बद्धा आकर्षेज्जीर्णदेवताम् ॥१३६॥
शै(शि)ली(ला)मयी भवेदर्चा तीर्थे बहूदकेषु च।
नदीसङ्गमसंस्थाने तस्मिञ्चैव तु निक्षिपेत् ॥१३७॥
सौवर्ण(र्णी) रजतं (राजती) चैव ताम्रं (ताम्री)
चैत्यमयीमपि (रीतिमयोरपि)।
द्रावयेदग्निना सर्वं(र्वां) यदीच्छेच्छ यमात्मनि ॥१३८॥
दारुमयी भवेदर्चा नववस्त्रेण वेष्टयेत्।
घृतेन मधुना स्निग्धं(ग्धां) दीप्तमग्नौ प्रदापयेत् ॥१३९॥
पार्थिवी च भवेदर्चा यदि स्यान्मृन्मयीमपि।
भू खनित्वा शिरोमात्रेन्यसेत्तस्मिन् प्रपूरयेत् ॥१४०॥
अर्चा वा यदि वा लिङ्गं पुनः शीघ्रन्तु स्थापयेत्।
सवलक्षणसम्पन्ना विधिदृष्टेन स्थापयेत् ॥१४१॥

द्विजश्च . . . नां (द्विजानां बालवृद्धानां) मानुषाणां शुभाय च।
राजा जयमवाप्नोति शस्यवृद्धिकरं भवेत् ॥१४२॥
जीर्णोद्धारणमर्चानां कृतं येन महात्मना।
युगकोटिशतसाहस्रं (युगकोटिसहस्राणि) देवलोके महीयते ॥१४३॥ ॥

आत्रेयतिलके जीर्णोद्धारः समाप्तः ॥०॥

नवतालस्यैकत्वेनाङ्गुलि १०८ शिरोऽङ्गुलि ४ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि ४ देहाङ्गुलि २४ नितम्बाङ्गुलि २ कट्यङ्गुलि ४ उर्वङ्गुलि २४ जान्वङ्गुलि ४ पिण्ड्यङ्गुलि २ गुल्फाङ्गुलि २ अधोभागाङ्गुलि ४ हिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि १७ बाहुभागाङ्गुलि १६ प्रबाह्वङ्गुलि १८ करभागाङ्गुलि १२ यवभागपरिसंख्या एकत्वेन ८६४॥०॥

अष्टतालस्यैकत्वेनाङ्गुलि ९६ शिरोऽङ्गुलि ३ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि ३ देहाङ्गुलि २२ नितम्बाङ्गुलि १ कट्यङ्गुलि ३ उर्वङ्गुलि २२ जान्वङ्गुलि ३ पिण्ड्यङ्गुलि २२ गुल्फाङ्गुलि १ अधोभागाङ्गुलि ३ हिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि ९ बाह्वङ्गुलि १४ कराङ्गुलि १२ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ७६८॥०॥

षट्तालस्य एकत्वेनाङ्गुलि ७२ शिरोऽङ्गुलि २ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि २ देहाङ्गुलि १६ नितम्बाङ्गुलि १ कट्यङ्गुलि २ उर्वङ्गुलि १६ जान्वङ्गुलि २ पिण्ड्यङ्गुलि १६ गुल्फाङ्गुलि १ अधोभागाङ्गुलि २ हिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि १४ (८) बाह्वङ्गुलि १० प्रबाह्वङ्गुलि १२ करपल्लवाङ्गुलि ८ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ५७६॥०॥

दशतालस्य एकत्वेनाङ्गुलि १२० शिरोऽङ्गुलि ४ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि ४ देहाङ्गुलि २६ नितम्बाङ्गुलि ४ कट्यङ्गुलि ५ उर्वङ्गुलि २ जान्वङ्गुलि ५ जङ्घाङ्गुलि २६ गुल्फाङ्गुलि ३ अधोभागाङ्गुलि ५ हिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि १६ बाह्वङ्गुलि १८ प्रबाह्वङ्गुलि १६ (२०) करपल्लवाङ्गुलि १२ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ९६०॥०॥

सप्ततालस्यैकत्वेनाङ्गुलि ८४ शिरोऽङ्गुलि ३ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि ३ देहाङ्गुलि १९ नितम्बाङ्गुलि १ कट्यङ्गुलि २ उर्वङ्गुलि १९ जान्वङ्गुलि ३ पिण्ड्यङ्गुलि १९ गुल्फाङ्गुलि १ अधोभागाङ्गुलि २ हिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि ५ बाह्वङ्गुलि १२ प्रबाह्वङ्गुलि १४ करपल्लवाङ्गुलि १० एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ६७२॥०॥

चतुस्तालस्यैकत्वोनाङ्गुलि ४८ शिरोऽङ्गुलि १ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि १ देहाङ्गुलि १२ नितम्बाङ्गुलि × कटि १ उरु ९ जानु १ पिण्डि ९ गुल्फ × पार्ष्णि २ हिक्कांसाग्र ८ बाहु ६ करपल्लव ७ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ३८८॥०॥

परश्च ॥ विधुचापसरश्चैव वह्निवेदगुणस्तथा। न्यूनाधिकं यथा कुर्य्याद्यवरास सुपालहा (?) ॥०॥

प्राचीनताडपत्र-पुस्तकादुद्धृतमिदम् ॥

Translation with Notes[1]

Adoration to Buddha

1-2 : Whatever characteristic signs about the measurements of images (details) have been recounted by the ancient sages in the *Ātreya-tilaka* and other old Buddhistic śāstras [2]—after collecting them all together and piling (arranging) them in order and after bowing down to the all-knowing god,[3] the characteristic signs about images are being narrated (by me).

3 : Twelve *aṅgulas* make one *tāla* [4] known also as *vitasti* and *mukha*, while two *aṅgulas* make one *golaka*, known also as *kalā*.

4-5 : The fourth part of the *pallava* [5] is known as the measuring *aṅguli* [6]; an expert should know that a *yava* is the eighth part of the *aṅgula;* this (the latter) is meant for the measurement of the different limbs of the images. One who knows should measure an image according to this rule.

[1] According to P. Bose, this text is described in the Tibetan version in two ways, *viz.*, (1) *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* by the sage Ātreya, and (2) *Ātreya-tilaka*, while its Sanskrit original suggests three different names, *viz.*, (1) *Devī-lakṣaṇam*, (2) *Ātreyalakṣaṇam*, and (3) *Ātreyatilaka* (P. Bose, *Pratimāmāna-lakṣaṇam*, Introduction, p. v.). But *Devīlakṣaṇam* can on no account be taken as a name of the text; our text puts this (just after verse 94)—*iti devīlakṣaṇam aṣṭatālam*, which can only mean that the devī icons are eight *tāla* in measurement. The section on *aṣṭatāla* in Bose's copy (v. 88—v. 87 in ours) contains a distinct reference to this feature of the devī images—*Dīrgham cāṣṭamukham kuryyāt devīnām lakṣaṇam budhaḥ*.

[2] This text is thus based on *Ātreyatilaka* and other old Buddhistic texts (or the first line may also be translated as ' in the Buddhist text *Ātreyatilaka* and other old texts '). But this does not mean that the canons are applicable to Buddhist images only; they are presumably of general application, though these are collected here by a Buddhist. Reference to the old sages is interesting; compare my observations in Chapter I, pp. 14-16. Atri is one of the 18 Vāstuśāstropadeśakas.

[3] *Sarvavidaṃ* meaning the all-knowing (*Sarvajña, Samyaksambuddha*) Buddha is a much better reading than Bose's *sarvamidam*.

[4] *Aṅgula* and *tāla* have been fully explained by me in Chapter VIII.

[5] *Pallava* is *karapallava*; here it means the section of the hand just a little above the place where the fingers shoot out from the palm.

[6] It is a relative unit (*mātrāṅgula*); though there is no explicit reference to the owner of the *pallava*, it appears that the palm of the image is meant here.

6 : After dividing the height of whichever the object (out of which the image is to be made)[1] into nine (equal) parts, the face (of the image) should be made one *tāla* (*i.e.*, one of the nine parts) in length and its width should also be the same.

7-9 : Faces (of the images) are (differently) shaped,—some like the letter *va*, others like a mango, others again like the egg of a bird and (a fourth type) like the sesamum (seed); that (type of face) which is less by 1½ *aṅgulas* is known as the *va*-shaped, that face which is less by 2 *aṅgulas* is of the shape of a mango, (a third variety) which is less by 2½ *aṅgulas* is called a bird-egg in appearance, while (the type) in which three *aṅgulas* are left out is named *sesamum*-shaped; in these four (varieties of) faces, the (above reductions) should be shunned in the cheeks (*i.e.*, the length of the faces should only be reduced, not their width).[2]

10 : Faces of female (figures) only should be of the sesamum (seed) variety. The head of the family dies, if the face (of the image) is not made according to the śāstric injunctions.

11 : If the face is made according to the śāstric injunctions, (the donor of the image) prospers with his friends. A sage should

The passage—*Yatkiñcidrūpakāyāmam* which has been translated as above reminds one of Utpala's passage—*Yasmāt kāṣṭhāt pāṣāṇādikādvā pratimā kriyate taddairghyam*, etc., fully explained by me in Chapter VIII.

[2] Reference to the four types of faces is interesting. It is clear that this comparison is based on the outline view of faces; if the above reductions are made in the length of their various types, they appear in outline like the four different objects. *Va* is the old Bengali *va*, shaped like an equilateral triangle, here seen in an inverted position—its base corresponding to the forehead and its apex to the chin. In Tāntric texts, the letter is sometimes compared to the female organ. A. N. Tagore refers to two types of faces, one having the form of a hen's egg (*kukkuṭāṇḍa*) and the other suggesting a ' *pān* (betel leaf) '; the former is the *khagāṇḍāoha* variety of our text and the latter closely conforms to the *tilākṛti* of the same (the outline of the sesamum seed being the same as that of the betel leaf—the sesamum flower is likened in Bengali poems to a well-shaped nose—*tilaphul jini nāsā*). Tagore remarks, ' It is for this reason probably (a certain well-defined fixity of form in the different specimens of the lower animals and plant organism), that our great teachers have described the shapes of human limbs and organs not by comparison with those of other men but always in terms of flowers or birds or some other plant or animal features ' (*Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*, p. 7, fig. 6). These four types of faces differ evidently from those in which the length and the breadth are the same.

make (the face of) images, after acquiring proficiency in all the *śāstras*.[1]

12: The head should be made 4 *aṅgulas* (a *gola*=2 *aṅgulas*) and should be shaped as an umbrella.[2] The forehead is said to measure 4½ *aṅgulas*.[3]

13-15: The curvature (sidewise) of the forehead is always 10 *aṅgulas*. The length of the nose is said to be 4½ *aṅgulas*; its width at the top is ¼ *aṅgula* (two *yavas*) and its projection[4] is 1½ *aṅgulas*. The height of the two sides (of the nose) is 2 *aṅgulas*, and the nasal septum is 3 *yavas* (in width); and the circular (orifices of the nose) are equal, measuring ½ an *aṅgula* each (in diameter), while the root of the nasal septum is 2 *yavas*; the outer surfaces of the nasal orifices (*i.e.*, the outside of the nostrils) is 3 *yavas* each and are conch-shell-like in appearance.

16-19: The mouth with the following measurements is praiseworthy. (The nose) is similar to the sesamum flower and it can also be compared to the face of either a parrot or a falcon.[6] The lower portion of it (the face and not the mouth)

[1] There is some mistake in the last line of the couplet. If the reading in our text is correct, then it is practically a repetition of the same idea. Bose's emendation of this line—*Evaṃ śāstrāgamaṃ kṛtvā arcāṃ tāṃ kārayedbudhaḥ*—is also not very happy.

[2] This characteristic shape of the head is one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*. The *Mahābhārata* describes the great gods Nara and Nārāyaṇa as characterised by such heads (XII, 343, 38—*Ātapatreṇa sadṛśe śirasi devayostayoḥ.| Evaṃ lakṣaṇasampannau mahāpuruṣasaṃjñitau*). Varāhamihira describes the heads of Cakravarttins as resembling the shape of an umbrella (*Bṛ. Saṃ.*, ch. 67, v. 79—*Chatrākāraiḥ śirobhiravanīśāḥ*).

[3] In most other texts the forehead is said to measure 4 *aṅgulas*.

[4] *Āyāma* does not mean height in this context, but length, which is ¼ *aṅgula* more than that laid down in many other texts. *Niṣkāsa* has been several times used in our texts; it was not translated by Bose. It no doubt means the mean projection of the nose from the facial surface.

[5] The curious word used in the text is *jihvāpiṇḍī*. *Piṇḍī* means base or the place of rest. Bose says that in the Tibetan version the line appears as—*Iti mānaṃ samyagjñānena jihvāgāre praśasyate*. Thus, this word may justifiably be translated as 'mouth (Bose also has done so).

[6] This line is out of place here. The mouth cannot be compared to a sesamum flower or the face of a parrot or a falcon. It appears that arrangement of the two lines in the couplet is reversed due to the copyist's error, and according to this suggestion of mine this line can very well go along with the preceding ones in which the different sections of the nose are described. The other line introduces the description of the mouth and its various parts. Bose could not render the word *samākāśa*; it is evidently a long form of *saṃkāśa* meaning similar.

is said to be 3 *aṅgulas* and 2 *yavas*,[1] while the mouth proper[2] should be made 6 *yavas* (in width), the upper lip being 4 *yavas*; the *goji* (the short vertical dimple between the centre of the upper lip and the nasal septum) placed above it should be made 3 parts of an *aṅgula* (*i.e.*, 6 *yavas*).[3] The lower lip should be like the mouth proper (in height or thickness, *i.e.*, 6 *yavas*), its width being 2 *aṅgulas*; a line (red, like) the *bimba* fruit should be made 6 *yavas*, in the middle or parting (of the two lips). The sides of the mouth (*sṛkkaṇī*) should be made a little drooping, (measuring) ½ an *aṅgula* each.

20-23: The chin should be 2 *aṅ.* sidewise and 10 *yavas* long (*i.e.*, high).[4] (A space) of half an *aṅgula* should be between the two eyebrows, their length should be 5 *aṅ.* (each); the unbroken and bow-shaped line of the eyebrow should measure ½ a *yava* (in width).[5] The eye should be 2 *aṅ.* 2 *yavas* (in length), its width being just 3 parts of it.[6] Then the pupil is said to be ⅓ part of the eye; it is well known that 3 parts of the former should be made black. The inside of the eyes should be of the tinge of the leaves of the water-lily and lotus and (should be shaped) like the belly of a fish; the outer corners of the eyes should be known as 2 *kalas* (?) and their inside 2 *aṅgulas*.[7]

[1] Bose's reading gives 1 *aṅgula* and 2 *yavas*.

[2] *Bhojaka*; Bose emends it into *Oṣṭhaka* and translates it as upper lip, rendering the next *caraṇa* (*uttaroṣṭhaṃ caturyavam*) as 'the lower lip is four *yavas*.' This is evidently incorrect. '*Adhara*' (lower lip) is mentioned below.

[3] Bose reads the first line of v. 18 as *Tribhāgāṅgulikā kāryā oṣṭhakasyoparisthitā*. But our reading is much better and the line is exactly the same as the last line in verse 8 of the other iconometric text, *Pratimālakṣaṇam* edited by me (*cf.* p. 11.)

[4] Bose renders the line as 'the chin should be 2 *aṅ.* broad and 10 *aṅ.* long'; but the translation given above seems to be better in keeping with the text.

[5] Bose reads *cāyākṛti* in place of *cāpākṛti* (clear in our text), and thus cannot translate the passage correctly.

[6] Bose says that 'the eye is the three-fourth part of the eye brow,' which is incorrect for 2 *aṅ.* and 2 *yavas* cannot be regarded as three-fourth of 5 *aṅgulas*.

[7] There seems to be some mistake here in the text. *Jyasodaram* is meaningless. Bose's emendation of the second *caraṇa* as *padmapatrasya sodare* is unsupportable. The *Kriyāsamuccaya* refers to the different measurements of the eyes of 5 types of divinities, *viz.*, the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas and the Goddesses; the shape of the eyes of the last, according to it, should be like the belly of a fish (*sarvāsāṃ śṛṅgārastrīṇāṃ aṣṭādaśayavāyāme triyavavistārānmatsyodarākāram*). *Jhaṣodaram* which means the belly of a fish, seems to be the correct reading.

24-26 : The ears are 2 *aṅ.* broad and 4 *aṅ.* long; the projection of the ears from the back is said to be 2 *aṅ.* The *truṭikā* (lobe of the ear?)[1] should be full 2 *aṅ.* and *kakuni* should be its half;[2] the raised little ridge between the temple and the earhole (*karṅāvarta*) is one-fourth part of an *aṅgula.*[3] The hole of the ear is 3 *yavas* (in diameter) and the sides (*pārṣṇikā—? pārśvikā*) are as beautiful; the ear-canal is said to be similar to the handle of a small chopper (?).[4]

27-30 : The (section of the) head between the two ears is 18 *aṅ.;* there is no doubt that the back of the forehead is 14 *aṅ.* (The space) between the line of the eyebrow and the eye is 1 *golaka* (*i.e.*, 2 *aṅ.*); (The space) between the chin and the root of the ear is 8 *aṅ.* Then, the chin and the forehead are parallel to the eyes, and the sides of the mouth should be measured in the same line with the side of the pupil; the line of the eyebrow and the *karṇasūtra* should also fall in the same line. The *truṭikā* and the middle of the ear should be like the above in the same line.[5]

31-32 : The projection of the face (from the plane of the neck) should be 2 *golakas* and the length of the neck should also be the same. (The space) from the root of the shoulder to the root of the ear will be 3 *golakas.* Folds of flesh below the chin should

[1] *Truṭikā* I have tentatively translated as ear-lobe, it is 2 *aṅ.* long; but in the case of the images of Buddha it is as long as 4 *aṅ.* (cf. *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, verse 20).

[2] *Kakuni* in our text is meaningless. Bose reads it as *kakudā*, but his reading of the major part of the line is faulty. He reads *Truṭikā dvyaṅgulam sampattadarddhā kakudā bhavet*—which has very little sense in it.

[3] My emendation of this line is based on the *Kriyāsamuccaya* commentary on the 18th verse (2nd line) of the *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, which reads—*Aṅgulasya caturthāṃśaḥ karṇāvartastu vistaraḥ.* The commentary explains the word *karṇāvarta* as *kapolakarṇachidrayormadhye karṇāvartaḥ kalikākāro dviyavaḥ* (2 *yavas*=½ *aṅ.*). Thus my emendation *karṇāvartastu* is far more acceptable than Bose's *karṇapālyastu* which he translates as ' the circle of the ear,' whatever he may mean by it.

[4] This line, especially its first half, is certainly faulty. I am not at all sure about my rendering.

[5] These directions about the correct placing of the different parts of the face are very helpful to the sculptor. The *bhrūsūtra*, *akṣisūtra* and *karṇasūtra* are mentioned here, the first two implicitly and the last explicitly.

be made as beautiful (as ever) and their length measurement should be lessened by degrees.[1]

33-35 : The hair on the head (should be shown in different ways) such as in the shape of a *mauli* or a *jaṭābandha* (particular modes of dressing the hair) or they may be curled; (or there should be) a *kirīṭa*, a *triśikha* (a three-peaked tiara), a crown (*mukuṭa*) or a *khaṇḍa* (? a *karaṇḍa*, another type of crown). Their height should be made 8 *aṅ.* but never more.[2] I shall speak now about the auspicious and inauspicious types of faces. (The former, *i.e.*, those which are auspicious) should be made a little smiling and endowed with beauty and grace. Know that there is no place (in art) of faces which are malicious, passionate, wrathful, sour or 'tter; they should be shunned from a distance.[3]

36-39 : Now I shall speak about the details of the measurements of the limbs. A sage should make the (portion of the body) from the hiccough (the dimple on the centre of the throat) to the navel two faces, *i.e.*, 24 *aṅgulas;* (the portion) from the navel to the root of the testicles, the curve of (either of) the buttocks sideways,[4] the (section) from the hiccough to either of the nipples,

[1] Bose's reading and translation differ greatly from mine. The second line is read by him as—*Tadālambapramāṇena cibukā karṇamūlayoḥ*, and translated thus, ' it (the rounded flesh below the chin) should fit in with the chin and the roots of the ears.' But this is not at all satisfactory. Undoubted reference is made in this couplet to the parallel folds of skin below the chin, which characterise one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣṇas*, *viz.*, *Kambugrīvatā* (front part of the neck compared to the top of a conch-shell which shows these parallel lines). What the author means is that these skin-folds should be shown by several parallel lines which will be shorter by degrees. In the Gupta and early mediaeval images, this feature is frequently present.

[2] It seems that when the hair on the head are shown dressed as above they should never be more than 8 *aṅ.* long; when they are enclosed within one or other types of the crowns mentioned above, the latter also should not be more than 8 *aṅgulas*. But in Chapter VIII, I have drawn attention to a *Matsya-purāṇa* passage where the *mauli* is described as 14 *aṅgulas*. In Bagchi's copy of this text the copyist writes *aṣṭādaśāṅgulam* which is rhythmically defective. The copyist, however, knows his mistake and puts two dots under *daśa*.

[3] Bose reads the first part of the last line of my couplet No. 35 as *cakraṃ vadanasaṃsthānam*. But ' a circular face ' ill fits with the other types which refer to their different expressions; I adhere to my reading and translation given above.

[4] Bose reads *tiryak pārśve hi te tathā* in the first line of my couplet No. 37. But I think my reading is much better, and it gives a clear and correct sense. The distance between the navel and the root of the testicles can never measure two *tālas*; the curvature of each of the buttocks measures also one *tāla*. A glance at

the space between the two nipples and (that) from the side of the neck to the top of the arm are all said to be one *tāla*. The portion between the navel and (either of) the two nipples is 14 *aṅgulas*. The hiccough and the top of the shoulders (*aṃsāgra*) should be placed in the same line; it has been well said that the width of the space between the two shoulders is 3 *tālas*.[1]

40-41 : The arm-pit should be made 6 *aṅgulas* and the space between it and the paps (*stana*) should also be the same;[2] the curvature of the region by the side of the nipple should measure one *gola*. The round nipple should be two *yavas* and the circle of the navel three *yavas*; the navel should be made deep and should be characterised by the *dakṣiṇāvarta* sign (*i.e.*, the curvature of the navel should turn from left to right).[3]

42 : The testicles should be 3 *aṅgulas* (each) and the penis 4 *aṅgulas*; the height of the hip or the buttock which will be fleshy, round and beautiful in appearance should be 8 *aṅgulas*.[4]

43-45 : The length of the arm which is praised by the learned is four faces; the upper arm should be 8 *kalās* and the four-arm 9 *golakas;* the length of the palm (without the fingers) should be 3 *golas* (the measurement of) the middle finger being the same.[5] The thumb should be made 2 *goals* and the little finger similar to it; the ring-finger should be less than the middle one

fig. 1 of plate VI in this book will support the correctness of my reading and translation.

1 Fig. 1 in Plate VI seems to show that the hiccough and the top of the shoulder are not in one line. But this is due to the curvature of the latter, its centre-line and the hiccough are really in the same plane. The lowermost base of the shoulders measurec 3 *tālas* from one end to the other.

2 Bose reads *akṣa* for *kakṣa*. which is wrong; he cannot translate *akṣa*; the second *caraṇa* is read by him as *vakṣastanāntaram* which is also incorrect. The author first gives us the inside measurement of the armpit and then remarks that the space between the armpit and the breast (*i.e.*, the centre of the breast—the nipple) is also the same.

3 Bose translates the passage—*dakṣiṇāvartalāñchanā*, as ' having the marks of its whirlpool,' which has no meaning. I have tried to render it correctly; the sign is one of the *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*.

4 The first part of the second line was read by Bose as *hicāvaṣṭāṅgulāvūrddhvaṃ* and translated as ' *hicha* should be eight *aṅgulas;*' I have given the correct reading and translation.

5 The palm and the middle finger being 6 *aṅgulas* each, the two taken together make up one *tāla*. In some texts, the former is 7 *aṅgulas* long and the latter 5 (cf. *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, vv. 27-8.)

by one half nail and the index-finger one nail less than the middle one.[1]

46-52 : The width of the thumb should be made 9 *yavas*; the side (measurement) of the middle finger (*i.e.*, its width) should be 8½ *yavas*; after making both (the ring-finger and the index-finger) 8 *yavas* (wide), the little finger (should be made) 7 *yavas*.[2] The wrist is known as 5 *aṅgulas* (distant) from the root of the ring-finger; the side measurement (*i.e.*, the width) of the palm should also be known as the same. The wrist from the root of the thumb is 2 *golas*, *i.e.*, 4 *aṅgulas* (apart), while (the space) between the root of the thumb and that of the index-finger should be made 1½ *kalā* (3 *aṅgulas*). The thumb should be of 2 digits while the rest should be of 3; the digits of the thumb and those of the other fingers should be known as the same. The tips (of the fingers) should be pointed and well-rounded,[3] and the finger-joints should be well-marked. The side measurement (width) of the nail should be made half of its own *aṅgula* and its length half of its digits; the sage should shape a nail where it joins its root like a crescent.[4] The palm (near its base ?) should be made 5 *aṅgulas* (wide) while its sides should be 2 *aṅgulas*. The whole of the palm should be adorned with auspicious lines.[5]

53-54 : I shall (now) speak of the marks in the palms of the gods which are of an auspicious character; the following, *viz.*, a conch-shell, a lotus flower, a flag, a thunder-bolt, a wheel, a *Svastika*, an ear-ring, a pitcher, moon, star, a *Śrīvatsa*, an elephant-

1 Verse 43 tells us that the length of the whole arm should be 48 *aṅgulas* (*mukhacatuṣṭaya*) but when the constituents of the arms are added up we get 46 only (*bāhu*−16+*prabāhu*−18+*kara*−6+*madhyamā*−6=46).

2 The first part of the first line of my verse 47 (the first part of the second line of v. 47 in Bose's edition) is not correctly rendered by Bose. He simply puts down that the width of both should be 8 *yavas* but the word *ubhau* undoubtedly refers here to the ring- and the index-fingers.

3 Bose's reading *suvṛtta* in place of *suvartita* is metrically defective.

4 Bose wrongly renders this line as ' the wise should make a nail like a half-moon at the tip.' The nail where it joins the finger at its root is shaped like a crescent.

5 This refers to one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*; the 29th one in the stereotyped list to be found in many Buddhist texts is *cakrāṅkitahastapādatalaḥ*. In verses 53-4, some of these auspicious signs are enumerated.

goad, a trident, a rosary and the earth goddess (*Vasudhā* ?) should be made (*i.e.*, drawn on the palm).[1]

55-58 : The root of the thighs (*i.e.*, the region from which the thighs come down) should be placed in the same line as the centre of the navel and the private parts;[2] the length of the thighs is 2 *vitastis*, while the same of the shanks is 2 *mukhas*. The knees should be 2 *kalas* and the ankles known as 1 *kala* each; the heels are known as 2 *kalas* each, and they are of the shape of a ripe *bimba* fruit. The feet should be 7 *aṅgulas* wide and 10 *aṅgulas* long; the length of the big toe should be made one-fourth part of the foot, the second toe (*sūcikā*) is equal to it (in measurement), while the middle toe is less by 2 *yavas*; the fourth toe is less by half a nail, while the little toe is less by a digit than the middle toe).[3]

59-62 : The width of the big toe is known as 11 *yavas*; the intervening space between its top and that of the second toe is 9 *yavas*; the same of the middle and fourth toes is said to be 8½ and 8 *yavas* respectively, in the canons of measurements. The toes are said to be like a green mango in appearance, the top of the feet should be made like the back of a tortoise; the toes are said to be similar to the feet of a *jaluka* (here meaning a swan). The feet should be made flat and level (to the ground) and the nails, of the form of oyster-shells.[4]

[1] A few only of these auspicious marks are mentioned in the *Pratimā-lakṣaṇam* (v. 27: *Saṅkham cakram tale nyastam padmam ca kuliśāṅkuśam | Sarvalakṣaṇarūpiṇyo lekhāḥ kāryāḥ pṛthagvidhāḥ*). I have little doubt about *yavamālā* in the text being a mistake for *japamālā* (a rosary).

[2] This rendering of the line seems to me more apposite than Bose's, which is, ' the root of the thigh should be measured parallel to the centre of the navel and penis '.

[3] In many other iconometric texts, the length of the feet is one *tāla*, *i.e.*, 12 *aṅgulas*; it is likely, the measurement of the big toe is left out in the estimate of the length of the foot in our text. It is laid down here that the length of the big and second toes is a quarter of the foot, *i.e.*, 2½ *aṅgulas*. Thus, according to this estimate, the feet with the toes will measure 12½ *aṅgulas*.

[4] The upper surface of the feet, convex in appearance like the back of a tortoise, is one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*. Varāhamihira tells us that the toes of the lords of men should be well-set and their feet convex-shaped like a tortoise (*Śliṣṭāṅguli.....kūrmonnatau ca caraṇau manujeśvarasya—Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 67, v. 2). The well-planned feet with fleshy convex shape were very carefully depicted by the early Indian artists. Reference to the toes being similar to the feet of a *jaluka* in the previous line is enigmatic. *Jaluka* means a leech; but ' toes like the leg of a leech ' (this is Bose's rendering) has little sense. The passage

63-65 : Now I shall speak about the measurements of the girth or periphery (of the different limbs). The girth of the head is known as 36 *aṅgulas*; the neck is 8 *aṅgulas* wide and three times this (*i.e.*, 24 *aṅgulas*) in its circumference. The space between the two arm-pits is 20 *aṅgulas* while the intelligent (artist) should make the girth of this region 19 *kalās*. The root, middle and front sections of the arm are 8, 6 and 4 *aṅgulas* respectively, while their respective girths should be thrice the measurement of their own width.

66-68 : The width of the belly in the middle is to be known as 15 *aṅgulas*—(the same) below it being 16. The hip is 18 *aṅgulas* (wide), the root of the thighs is 6 *golas* (wide) and the width of the root of the shanks and their end should be known to be 6 *aṅgulas* and 2 *kalās* respectively, by the learned. The periphery of all the above as also of the fingers and all other (limbs) where there is roundness should be thrice (the measurement of their width).

69-70 : The projection of the head from the back is to be one *kalā*. The backbone should be made straight and be on the same plane as the buttocks; the thighs, the calf of the legs and the heels should also be made on the same plane; a twice-born should know as above the characteristic sign of the back (parts of the body).[1]

71 : Pearl-garlands, waist-girdles, bracelets, armlets, ear-rings and well-arranged drapery should be made (shown) on the body.

72-77 : The merits and demerits of images according to their big or small size are being spoken of now. (To them) should be

' *jalukapādasaṃsthānā* ' may be a mistake for ' *jālapādasamasthānā* ' which would mean like the (feet of the) swan and may refer to the webbing of the toes. One of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas* is ' *jālāṅgulihastapāda*,' which, whatever might have been its original significance, came to mean as early as the fourth century A.D.— ' the feet and the hands of the *mahāpuruṣa* are netted ' like those of the *haṃsarāja*—the golden mallard. For discussion about this sign, see my articles on ' The Webbed Fingers of Buddha,' *I. H. Quarterly*, Vol. VI, pp. 717-27; Vol. VII, pp. 654-56.

[1] Bose's translation of the 2nd line of verse 69 is wrong. He renders it thus, ' the back should be made like a bamboo and the end of the neck should be on the same plane.' His difficulty was that he could not emend the passage *pṛṣṭham vaṃśam* in the text as *pṛṣṭhavaṃśa* which means ' the backbone '; *sphicau* means buttocks and not ' the end of the neck '.

given well-fixed seat (pedestal) having (requisite) length and breadth. The head (of the image) should be made like an umbrella; (this) produces wealth, good crops and prosperity. Well-drawn lines of eyebrows on the forehead bring eternal good fortune. If the image is well-made, the subjects become full of happiness; if the image has a neck like a conch-shell, it is always the bestower of all success. The body like a lion enhances plenitude and strength; the arms shaped like the trunk of an elephant fulfil all desires and ends. (Images with) well-shaped belly bring forth plenitude and prosperity; (their) thighs shaped like a plantain-tree increase (the stocks of) goats and cows, while well-shaped calfs of the legs make the villages prosperous. An image, if it be of well-carved feet, causes good conduct and learning. Thus has been described the excellence of images; now are being narrated their defects and demerits.[1]

78-84: The deficiency in the length and breadth (of an image) causes famine and revolution. If it (the image) be deficient in body, (its maker or donor) becomes hunch-backed and if it be noseless, then he gets ill. The eye-sight of an image turned towards the left destroys one's fame, while the same raised upwards causes loss of wealth; (images) with small eyes, round eyes or eyes with squint are also of similar nature (*i.e.*, they cause loss of wealth). One should avoid from a distance (images) with eyes small (in measurement) or eyes cast down. If the image is made with a sunken belly, then there will always be destruction of crops; if its thighs be less (in measurement), then abortion will certainly be caused there. If the three, *viz.*, the nose, eyes and fingers are short, there will be great demerit; this will also be so, if the shanks, neck and chin (of the image) be too long, if its head, ears and nose are too thick, if its joints, belly and nails are too thick, if its hands, feet and eyes are too

[1] The above couplets refer to some signs of physical beauty such as *chatrākṛtiśīrṣatā*, *kambugrīvatā*, etc., which are peculiar to great men and gods. The comparison of several limbs to different animal and plant organisms in some of the lines is very apt; I have already referred to A. N. Tagore's very illuminating study of this aspect of Indian art (*Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*). These verses and those immediately following fully show that the authors of the *Śilpaśāstras* were very much alive to the necessity of artists fashioning really beautiful images, even when they were asked to follow the injunctions laid down in the texts.

low, if its neck, shoulders and arms are too short.[1] After knowing these merits and demerits, the wise should make an image.

85-86: The length or height and girth of (images) characterised by *Navatāla* have been described as above. The gods should surely (measure) 9, and god-like men 8½ faces; (ordinary) men are 8 *tāla*, the mothers (*i.e.*, women) 7½.[2] The periphery and height (measurements) of (images) of 6 or 7 *tāla* measure are described according to the rules (detailed) in the *Ātreyalakṣaṇa*.[3]

87-90: The sage should make the Devī images eight times the face in height; the face should be made 6 *kalās*, the torso 11 *kalās*. The width of the neck, breasts and the space between the two nipples—all these parts of the goddess-figures are made one-half the face (*i.e.*, 6 *aṅgulas*). The middle part (?) should be made 8 *aṅgulas*, the loins are known to be 5 *kalās*, the hip should be made 20 *aṅgulas* and the thighs or upper legs 11 *kalās*. The knees are 3 *aṅgulas* each and the calfs of the legs 20 *aṅgulas*; the ankle should be made 2 *aṅgulas*—this is the auspicious mark of the goddesses.

91-94: The periphery of the head should be made 30 *aṅgulas*; the root of the arms is 5 *aṅgulas*, while its girth should be three times this. The wrist is 3 *aṅgulas* (wide) and its circumference is thrice the same (*i.e.*, 3 times 3 *aṅgulas*, *viz.*, 9 *aṅgulas*). The middle part of the thighs is (characterised) by

[1] Bose's translation of the above verses is somewhat defective; *e.g.*, he renders *kekarākṣī* as 'eyes contracted,' while it certainly means eyes with a squint'. His reading *grīvā'syam bhuja* in verse 82 can certainly be improved upon; the passage should read *grīvāṃsabhuja* all of which should never be too short or low. *Saptotsedhatā*, *i.e.*, the seven limbs being raised is one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*. The *Kriyāsamuccaya* comments on the term in this manner: *Saptotsedheti saptāvayavāḥ utsedhā unnatāśceti.....katame pādadvayaṃ hastadvayaṃ skandhadvayaṃ grīvā ceti.....kiñcidunnatirutsedhaḥ*.

[2] Evidently this height measurement is only applicable to ordinary women; in verse 85, it is expressly mentioned that the Devī images are characterised by a height which is 8 times their own face. Bose's reading as well as rendering of the first line of my couplet No. 85 is faulty; he reads it as—*Kiṃca vaktre dhruvaṃ caiva aṣṭārddha devamānuṣāḥ* and translates it as, 'In the case of the mouth of gods and men, it should be eight and half.' But there is no doubt that the author refers here to the height of two individual types, *viz.*, 'Gods' and 'men like gods' (*devakalpamanuja* in the *Matsyapurāṇa*, already referred to by me in Chapter VIII). The first line of verse 85 evidently refers to the *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* type of beings.

[3] In this line, there is an undoubted reference to the original source, *viz.*, *Ātreyalakṣaṇam*, from which all these details were collected by the author.

6 *kalās* and its girth is 3 times it (*i.e.*, 18 *kalās* or 36 *aṅgulas*). The middle of the shanks is 5 *aṅgulas*, its circumference being thrice the same. In all cases, (the girth of the particular limbs) should be made three times (their width), and in the case of the fingers, this is the same. The outer corners of the eyes, the breasts, the hips (of the female figures) should be made a little more than the measurement (laid down in the canons), for then it will be more pleasing to the eye.

The above is the eight-*tāla* Devī image.[1]

95-96 : Now I shall speak about the characteristic measurements of children (gods in the shape of boys); the auspicious characteristic marks of the image of Senāpati (Kārttikeya), Vināyakas and the Yakṣas are all in the shape of boys—(their height) is 6 times (their face).[2]

97-102 : A *golaka* is to be known in the top of the head (*i.e.*, the latter is to measure 2 *aṅgulas* in height), the face (should be a sum) of 6 *golakas*. The neck is to be made 2 *aṅgulas*, there should be 20 *aṅgulas* in the torso. The navel is to be ½ a *gola* or a *kalā*, the depth there being 1 *aṅgula*.[3] The thighs should be made 7 *kalās* (each), the knees being one *golaka*; the calfs should be made 6 *kalās*, while the ankle is known as 1 *aṅgula*. The heel as before is 3 *aṅgulas*, the feet 5 *kalās* and the big toe 1 *golaka* in length. The second toe should be made equal to the big toe, the middle toe is just less than it by 2 *yavas*, the fourth toe is less by a nail while the little toe, by a digit. (The space between) the hiccough and the shoulder (extremity) is 8 *aṅgulas*, the upper arm 9 *aṅgulas*, the fore-arm 5 *golas*, the length of the palm 2 *golakas*. The middle finger is 2 golas, the index-finger is less than it by a

[1] I have already pointed out Bose's mistake in reading it as *Devī lakṣaṇe* and suggesting that the term is one of the names of the text.

[2] Bose's translation of this part of the text as ' the marks of the idols of children, of generals, of the Vināyakas, of Yakṣas are six-fold and auspicious ' is undoubtedly wrong. Senāpati is Kārttikeya, the war-god; Yakṣas here evidently refer to the Gaṇas, and Vināyakas, to their leader Gaṇapati and his various aspects. In other iconometrical texts, the god Gaṇapati is enjoined to be made according to the *Pañcatāla* measurement. The text is very corrupt here.

[3] Bose's reading and rendering of this line are partly faulty; he reads it—*Arddhagolakalā nābhyāṃ khanitaṃ tryaṅgulaṃ tathā*, and translates it as follows: The navel should be half a *gola* and one *kalā*, and three *aṅgulas* deep '. The width and the depth of the navel in figures of boys can never be 3 *aṅgulas* each.

nail; the ring-finger should be made half a nail less than the middle finger; the thumb and the little finger are to be less by a digit than the ring-finger.[1]

103-109 : Now, I shall speak about the *kalās* (in connection with the width (measurements of the six-*tāla* images).[2] The head should be 2½ *kalās*, its circumference being thrice as much; the middle of the face is 6 *kalās*, the space between the ear and the tip of the nose being as much. There are 3 *kalās* in the middle of the neck, the belly being 16 *aṅgulas*; in the middle of the torso (the width) is 6 *golas*, the hip being 7 *golakas*. The middle of the thigh is 4 *golas* (wide), the knee is 2 *kalās* and 6 *yavas;* the shank in its middle is known as 5 *aṅgulas* (in width), the ankle is 3 *aṅgulas*. The feet in their width are said to be 2 *kalās* and ½ *aṅgula* each. The big toe is 9 *yavas*, the intervening space (between it and the next toe) is known as 3 *yavas;* the second toe should be made 8 *yavas*, the middle toe, 7 *yavas*. The fourth and the little toes are to be made 6 and 5 *yavas* respectively; thus should the learned make the toes beautiful. The heel is said to be 3 *aṅgulas* in width. Or, the big toe is 8 *yavas* and the middle toe 7.[3] These are the characteristics of the six-*rūpa* (*tāla* images) in the *Ātreyatilaka*.[4]

110-11 : After this, I shall speak about the characteristics of the *daśatāla*. The auspicious images of such deities as Brahmā, the goddess Carcikā, the Ṛṣis, the Brahmarākṣasas, the celestial beings and the Buddhas should be made (according

[1] I accept Bose's emendation of this passage as ' *madhyamārddhanakhahīnāṃ* ' which has much better sense than *madhyamparvanakhahīnaṃ* of the Sanskrit original. The Tibetan version fully supports his correction.

[2] Bose has inserted just before this line *Iti saptatālaḥ* on the authority of the Tibetan version. But it is evident that the verses preceding it (95-102) deal with the length or height measurements of *Ṣaṭtāla* images; the word *ṣaḍguṇam* (6 times the face) in verse 95 means *ṣaṭtālam*. His preference for *ṣaṭtālasya lakṣaṇam* in the first line of my verse No. 103 to *vistāreṇa kalāni ca*, on the authority of the Tibetan version, is unjustifiable. The author of the text gives us details of the width measurements of the *Ṣaṭtāla* images in verses 103-109, and their length or height measurements in verses 95-102.

[3] This line is omitted in the Tibetan version and Bose omits it accordingly. But it refers to an alternative measurement of two of the toes and can be accepted as genuine.

[4] Bose reads *Ātreyalakṣaṇe ṣaṭtālasya lakṣaṇam*.

to this *tāla* measurement), and no images of others (should be made according to it).

112-16 : The head should be 2 *golakas*, the face 6 *golakas;* the neck should be made 2 *golakas*, and the torso 26 *aṅgulas*. The buttocks are to be known as 2 *kalās* (each), the hip should be 5 *kalās;* the thighs are 26 *aṅgulas*, the knee is known as 5 *aṅgulas*. The shanks are 26 *aṅgulas*, the ankle is known as 3 *aṅgulas;* the portion below it (*i.e.*, the heel) is to be made 5 *aṅgulas*, as is well-ordained. The portion of the upper arm is to be made as 8 *golakās* and the learned should know that the fore-arm is 10 *golakas*. Know that the section of the palm with the fingers is 6 *kalās*. Those who are well-versed in the *śāstras* (*śilpaśāstras*) should make these measurements (of height or length in the *daśatāla* images).

These are the characteristics of the *daśatāla* (measurement) in the *Ātreyatilaka*.[1]

117-18 : Now, I shall speak about the characteristics of the *saptatāla*. The head is to be known as 3 *aṅgulas*, the face 6 *kalās;* the neck is known as 3 *aṅgulas*, and it should be made with the conch-shell mark. The torso is 19 *aṅgulas*, well-adorned with (proper) proportions and roundness.

119-22 : The buttock is one *aṅgula*, the hip 1 *golaka*, the thighs 19 *aṅgulas*, the knee 3 *aṅgulas*, the shanks 19 *aṅgulas*, the ankle is known as 1 *aṅgula;* the portion below (the ankle—*i.e.*, the heel) in the *saptatāla* image is 2 *aṅgulas*. The portion from the hiccough to the extremity of the shoulder should be made 8 *aṅgulas;* the *aṅgulas* known to constitute the upper arms are said to be 1 *tāla* (this is a roundabout way of saying that the upper arm is 12 *aṅgulas* in length), the forearm should be made 7 *golakas* (in length) by the best of the sages. The section of the palm with the fingers is said to be 8 *aṅgulas*. The (above)

[1] The author of the text gives only a summary of the length measurements of the *daśatāla* images. In verse 143, the height of the *nitamba* and *kaṭi* is laid down as 9 *kalās* and 5 *kalās*, *i.e.*, 4 and 10 *aṅgulas* respectively. But the summary of these details given in the end of the text lays down that the *nitambāṅguli* and *kaṭyaṅguli* are 4 and 5 *aṅgulas* respectively; this would make the sum-total of a *daśatāla* image full 120 *aṅgulas*, while, according to verse 113, it would be 125 *aṅgulas*.

measurements (lengthwise) of men are to be made by those well-versed in the *śāstras*.

(Thus end) the characteristics of the *Saptatāla* measurement in the *Ātreyatilaka*.[1]

123-28 : Now, I shall speak about the characteristic features of the *catustāla* (measurement). The head should be made 1 *aṅgula*, the face 12 *aṅgulas;* know that the neck is 1 *aṅgula*, the torso 12 such; the buttock and hip are known to be ½ and 1 *aṅgula* respectively. The thigh should be 9 *aṅgulas*, the knee is known as 1 *aṅgula;* the shank is known as 9 *aṅgulas* and the ankle should be ½ *aṅgula;* the portion below the latter (*i.e.*, the heel) is said to be 1 *aṅgula*. The space between the hiccough and the extremity of the shoulder is to be known as 4 *kalās*. The upper arm is 3 *golakas*, the forearm 8 *aṅgulas;* the palm with the fingers is known as 7 *aṅgulas* in length. The modelling of the above should be made as beautifully as possible. The measurement of the dwarfs is described (as above) by the best of the sages.

The above is the description of the *Catustāla* in the *Ātreyatilaka*.

129-30 : Listen ! I shall now speak about the disposition of images of large size. (Among them) the smallest one is known to be 15 cubits (in height); the medium-sized one is twice (the above size—30 cubits), the big-sized ones being known thrice the same (*i.e.*, 45 cubits). If one wishes for his own welfare, he should not make (an image) bigger than it (45 cubits).[2]

131-136 : The image of a deity, if it be burnt, worn out, broken or split up, after its establishment or at the time of its enshrinement, will always be harmful.[3] A burnt image brings forth draught, an worn-out one causes loss of wealth, a broken image forbodes death in the family, while one that is split up,

[1] The proportions of the *Saptatāla* images come after those of the *Daśatāla* ones; The *Navatāla* and *Aṣṭatāla* proportions are given order of precedence to the other two. *Pañcatāla*, *Tri-*, *Dvi-* and *Eka-tā'a* images are not referred to in our text.

[2] These huge images were usually made of clay; but it is certain that they reached such heights very rarely. Varāhamihira, as I have shown in Chapter VIII, speaks only of two-, three- or at most four-cubit images.

[3] Bose wrongly renders the term '*devatā*' as 'goddess'.

war. Be it an image or be it the phallic emblem of Śiva, whether the images be those of the goddesses or Divine Mothers—all of them should be raised (from the sanctum) according to the rites laid down by the law.[1] After giving oblations of flowers, incense, food and sacrificial offerings and clothes, (the householder or donor of the above types of images), after duly performing sacrificial rites, should have the ceremony of propitiatory water performed according to Vedic *mantra*.[2] A rope is to be made of hair, *muñja*-grass, woven silk or linen, according to rule; then the old or worn-out god (*i.e.*, the image) should be taken away after tying him (with the rope) to the hump (*i.e.*, the neck) of a bull.

137-140: If the image is made of stone, then it should be immersed in sacred streams full of water or in the confluences of rivers. If the images are made of gold, silver, copper or brass, then all of them should be melted in fire, if one desires one's own welfare. If the image is of wood, then it should be covered with new cloth, and after being sprinkled with clarified butter and honey it should be put into a blazing fire. In case the image is made of earth, then a pit should be dug into the ground (to the depth of its head) and afterwards it should be placed into the hole, which is then to be filled up.[3]

141-43: Whether it be an image or a Śivaliṅga (which is to be destroyed in the different ways mentioned above) another image endowed with all auspicious signs should be re-enshrined according to rules (*i.e.*, a new replica of the old one is to be set up in the place of the latter). This act results in the welfare of the Brahmans, the young and old and all mankind in general, the king wins victory, and (the act of restoration) conduces to the increase of crops. The noble soul, by whom the old images are replaced

[1] I prefer the reading *udghāṭayet* which means 'should be raised' to Bose's *udjāpayet* which he has translated as 'should be given farewell'.

[2] The Brahmin priests usually sprinkle propitiatory water (*śāntijala*) on the householder and the members of his family after the performance of each *naimittika karma*, while muttering the Vedic *mantra*:—*Om svasti na Indro vṛddhaśravāḥ svasti naḥ puṣā viśvavedāḥ*, etc.

[3] Bose reads *pāṣāṇī* in place of *pārthivī*; but *śilāmayī* is already mentioned in verse 137. *Pārthivī* and *mṛnmayī*, however, denote the same type of images. It may be that one refers to terracotta figures, while the other means ordinary clay ones.

by new ones, lives a glorified life in the heavens for more than one thousand crores of *yugas*.

Here ends the chapter on the restoration of old (images—*jīrṇoddhāra*) in the *Ātreyatilaka*.[1]

[1] Bose takes verses 141-42 as later additions, because they are not included in the Tibetan version and because they seem to have no connection with the preceding verses. But these two couplets are certainly not out of place or context here, for several of the preceding verses expatiate on the merits of restoration. The *Agnipurāṇa* (ch. 67, vv. 1-5) expatiates on the same topic; there is, however, some noticeable difference in the two texts as regards the disposal of old images.

APPENDIX B

PART III

In this Appendix are incorporated in tabular form the broader details about the height measurements of the *daśatāla* images as laid down in a few comparatively late texts. The *daśatāla*, as I have shown in Chapter VIII, is of three varieties, viz., *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*, measuring 124, 120 and 116 *aṅgulas* respectively. For further details about the above, the reader may refer to T. A. G. Rao's *Tālamāna* or *Iconometry* (*M. A. S. I.*, No. 3), where he has collected much valuable textual data about the other *tāla*-images. Since the publication of Rao's work, *Śilparatna* of Śrīkumāra has been edited in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series and now it is possible for one to check some of these data with the help of the edited text.

UTTAMADAŚATĀLA

	Śilparatna		*Kāraṇāgama*		*Kāmikāgama*		*Vaikhānasāgama*	
	Aṅgula	Yava	Aṅgula	Yava	Aṅgula	Yava	Aṅgula	Yava
The height of the *uṣṇīṣa*	1	3	1	...	1	...	1	3
From it to *keśānta*	3	...	3	...	3	...	3	...
From *keśānta* to *akṣi-sūtra*	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
From *akṣisūtra* to nose	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
From nose to chin	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
From chin to throat	...	4	...	4	...	4	...	4
Neck	3	7	4	...	4	...	3	7
From *hikkāsūtra* to the end of the breast	13	3	13	4	13	4	13	3
From breast to the navel	13	3	13	4	13	4	13	3
From navel to the *meḍhramūla*	13	3	13	...	13	...	13	3
From *meḍhramūla* to the thigh	27	...	27	...	27	...	26	5
Knee-cap	4	...	4	...	4	...	4	3
Jaṅghā	27	...	27	...	27	...	26	5
Jaṅghā to *pādatala*	4	...	4	...	4	...	4	3
TOTAL ...	124		124		124		124	

DAŚATĀLA

I. Height measurements of a Buddha image of 120 *aṅgulas* according to *Pratimālakṣaṇa* :—

Uṣṇīṣa	4	*aṅ*
Keśasthāna	2	,,
Face	13½	,,
Neck	4	,,
Neck to chest	12½	,,
Chest to navel	12½	,,
Navel to penis	12½	,,
Thigh	25	,,
Knee	3	,,
Shank	25	,,
Gulpha	2	,,
Pārṣṇi	4	,,
Total height ...	120	*aṅ.*

II. Same, according to the *Kriyāsamuccaya* commentary :—

Uṣṇīṣa to neck	20½	*aṅ.*
Neck	4	,,
Neck to chest	12½	,,
Chest to navel	12½	,,
Navel to penis	12½	,,
Thigh	25	,,
Knee	6	,,
Shank	25	,,
Gulpha	2	,,
Pārṣṇi	4	,,
Total height ...	124	*aṅ.*

The commentary thus gives us details about a Buddha image of the *Uttamadaśatāla* measure.

III. Height measurements of a *daśatālapramāṇa* image according to *Śukranīti* :—

Face	13	*aṅ.*
Neck	5	,,
Neck to chest	13	,,
Chest to navel	13	,,
Navel to penis	13	,,
Thigh	26	,,
Knee	5	,,
Shank	26	,,
Pārṣṇi (*gulphādhaḥ*)	5	,,
Total height ...	119	*aṅ.*

It is one *aṅgula* less than the full measure. But there is no mention of the height of *gulpha* here.

IV. Height measurements of a *madhyamadaśatāla* image (goddess) according to *Mānasāra* :—

Head (crown to hair-line)	4	*aṅ.*
Forehead (up to the eye-line)	5	,,
Nose (up to the lip)	4	,,
Lip to chin	3½	,,
Neck-joint	½	,,
Neck	4	,,
Hiccough to chest	13	,,
Chest to navel	13	,,
Navel to organ	13	,,
Thigh	26	,,
Knee	4	,,
Shank	26	,,
Foot	4	,,
Total height ...	120	*aṅ.*

It is to be noted that in most of the above tables (except in that from the *Śukranīti*), the portion above the hair-line is included in the computation of the total height. The author of the *Śukranīti* follows the earlier tradition in leaving it out (cf. *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; see Pl. VI., Fig. 1).

APPENDIX C

When I edited the text, *Samyaksambuddhabhāṣita Buddha-pratimālakṣaṇam*, I thought it would be interesting to compare the measurements of a few well-preserved Buddha figures of different periods in the collections of Museums in Northern India, with those laid down in the text. I wanted to find out how far the actual practice tallied with the textual data. While engaged in the present work, I measured several representative specimens of Brahmanical images in the galleries of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, with the same object in view. The measurements which I could take with the help of anthropometric instruments were mainly of height or length and rarely of the width of the various sections of the images. Ancient and mediaeval icons are usually relievo-figures; so the periphery of their respective parts cannot be measured. Interspaces can also seldom be measured in most cases, owing to the difficulty in locating the extreme points. Again, as these images, unlike those of Buddha, very often bear on their different limbs a variety of ornaments, it is extremely difficult to be sure about the iconometric data collected from them. So, I took only those measurements about which I could be reasonably sure, and I record them in order that they may be compared with the corresponding ones laid down in the texts. I have initiated this comparison myself, and have shown that there seems to be a fair agreement between the respective data in the case of those images which are comparatively well-executed ones. Most of the images partially measured by me belong to the mediaeval period.[1]

[1] I offer my thanks here to Messrs. S. K. Saraswati, M.A., and T. C. Raychowdhuri, M.A., P.R.S., of the Calcutta University, for helping me in collecting these iconometric data. My sixth-year students of A.I.H.C. (Gr. IB) and Pali (Gr. E) departments (session 1939-40), also helped me in this work.

1. Viṣṇu (from Bihar), formerly in the Indian Museum (No. 3864), now in the collection of the Asutosh Museum; date—C. 9th century A.D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	67.7	c.m.
,, (without ,,)	59.0	,,
Length of the crown	1.3	,,
,, ,, face	7.0	,,
,, ,, neck	2.6	,,
Neck to navel	12.4	,,
Navel to knee	21.3	,,
Knee to instep	12.4	,,
Instep	2.0	,,
Full height without *kirīṭa* ...	59.0	,,
Length of the *kirīṭa*	8.7	,,
Width of the face	7	,,

According to the dictum of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the *aṅgula* unit of this image would be $\frac{59}{108}$, *i.e.*, ·54 c.m. approximately (decimal places more than two being left out). Now ·54 × 12 is 6·48 which is ·52 less than the actual face-length. But the length and width of the face of the image are the same, and there is a close conformity with the text, as regards the measurements of the neck, neck to navel, the shanks and instep sections of the figure. The crown of the head (*i.e.*, from the hair-line to the top of the head), is included here in the whole height. The length of the *kirīṭa* or *mauli* according to the *Matsyapurāṅa* is 14 *aṅgulas*, which on the basis of the above unit will be 7·56 c.m.; but its actual length is 8·7, or 1·14 *aṅgulas* in excess.

2. Viṣṇu (No. 10 P. C. N.) in the Asutosh Museum, from Eastern India; date—C. 10th century A.D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	43.8	c.m
,, (without ,,)	38.5	,,
Length of the crown	.7	,,
,, ,, face	5.2	,,
,, ,, neck	1.8	,,
Neck to navel	8.6	,,
Navel to feet	22.2	,,
	38.5	,,
Length of the forehead	1.6	,,
,, ,, nose	1.6	,,
,, ,, chin	2.0	,,
Total face length	5.2	,,

Width of the face	5.2	c.m.
Width along the shoulders ...	13.8	,,
,, from arm-pit to arm-pit ...	8.8	,,
,, of the waist-line ...	5.9	,,

The *aṅgula* unit of this image would be $\frac{88{\cdot}5}{108}$ *i.e.*, ·35 c.m. Now, 4·2(·35 × 12) ought to be its face-length; but actually it is 5·2 c.m., *i.e.*, just about one *aṅgula* in excess. This would be so according to the *Drāviḍa-māna*, but the width in that case should have been 4·2 (which is not so here). It ought to be noted here that the respective lengths of the forehead and the nose of this image approximate to 4 *aṅgulas*, while the same from below the end of the nose to the extremity of the chin is somewhat in excess. A reference to Appendix B will show that according to some texts, the last is a little longer than the first two.

3. Viṣṇu Trivikrama (from Eastern India), now in the Indian Museum (Ms. 13); date—C. 11th century A.D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	77.9	c.m.
,, (without ,,)	66.2	,,
Face-length	7.1	,,
Chin to navel	17.9	,,
Navel to knee-top	21.7	,,
Patella	2.5	,,
Shanks	14.45	,,
Pārṣṇi	2.55	,,
	66.2	,,
Width of the face	7.1	,,
Length of the forehead	2	,,
,, ,, nose	2.4	,,
Nose to chin	2.7	,,
Width of the waist	8.7	,,
From shoulder to shoulder ...	21.4	,,
,, arm-pit to arm-pit ...	14.6	,,
Width of the middle digit of the medius	.9	,,

The *dehalabdha-aṅgula* unit of this figure is ·61 c.m. The length of the face according to the textual basis would be 7·32 (·61 × 12), which is very close to the actual face length. The sameness of the length and the width of the face fully endorses the textual data. It should be noted that the three sections of the face are not equal in our sculpture; but the length of the nose very closely corresponds to what has been enjoined in many

of the *Śilpaśāstras;* the actual measurement is 2·4 c.m., while the academic one is 2·44 (·61 × 4). Here, the *kirīṭa* exceeds the academic length by as much as 3·16 c.m.

4. Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu (from Jessore district, Bengal), now in the Asutosh Museum; date—C. 11th century A.D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	134.6	c.m.
,, (without ,,)	115.8	,,
Crown	1	,,
Face-length	13.2	,,
Neck	5.2	,,
Neck to navel	25.7	,,
Navel to knee	36.5	,,
Shanks	29.8	,,
Feet	4.4	,,
Total ...	115.8	,,
The width of the face	13.6	,,
From shoulder to shoulder ...	38.5	,,
,, arm-pit to arm-pit ...	26	,,
Length of the forehead	4.5	,,

The *dehāṅgula* of this image according to previous calculation will be 1·07 and on this basis its face-length ought to be 12·84 which is somewhat less than the actual face-length. If we derive its *aṅgula* on the *adhama daśatāla* basis, then the *dehāṅgula* becomes ·99. Then its academic face-length will be equal to 11·88 or 12; but still this does not conform to actual length. The actual measurements of the other sections also do not at all conform to the textual data, in whatever manner we may derive the *aṅgula*. The sculpture is not well-executed, and the artist, it seems, did not bother much about the details of measurements.

5. Miniature Viṣṇu (from Sunderbuns, Bengal), originally in the collection of Kalidas Dutt, and now in the Asutosh Museum; date—C. 10th-11th century A.D.

Height (without *kirīṭa*)	7.5	c.m.
Crown	1.4	,,
Face-length	.9	,,
Neck	.2	,,
Neck to navel	1.3	,,
Navel to ankles	3.4	,,
Pārṣṇi	.3	,,
Total ...	7.5	,,

Width of the face	.9	c.m.
Length of the forehead	.3	,,
,, ,, nose	.3	,,
,, ,, chin	.3	,,

This is a very well-carved miniature figure of Viṣṇu and the artist seems to have closely followed the details of the *navatāla* mode. One thing to be noted here is this: in each of the image measured up till now, the top of the crown of the head is included in the academic measurement of the whole height of the figure. In the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the portion above the *keśarekhā* seems to be left out of it. But in later texts on iconometry, this is not the case.

6. Śiva (from Bihar), now in the Indian Museum (No. 3851); date—C. 10th century A.D.

Height (with *jaṭāmukuṭa*) ...	77.7	c.m.
,, (without *jaṭāmukuṭā* up to the hair line)	68.1	,,
Length of the face	7.7	,,
Neck	5.8	,,
Neck to navel	14.4	,,
Navel to knee	23.9	,,
Knee to foot	16.3	,,
Total ...	68.1	,,
Width of the middle digit of the medius	.5	,,
The Height of the Prabhāvalī with *pīṭhikā*	98.4	,,
The Height of the *pīṭhikā* ...	11.6	,,
The Width of the waist	8.6	,,
From arm-pit to arm-pit	12.3	,,
The Height of the *jaṭāmukuta* ...	9.6	,,

The *navatāla* measure of this sculpture does not seem to include the length of the top of the crown and this is thus laid down in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*. Its *dehāṅgula* is ·63 and its face-length fairly corresponds to the academic one of 7·56. The correspondence is not so approximate in the other sections of the body measured by me.

7. Sūrya (from Bihar), now in the Indian Museum (No. 3934): date—C. 10th century A.D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	72.1	c.m.
,, (without ,,)	62.0	,,
Face-length	7.2	,,
Neck	2.8	,,
Neck to navel	13.7	,,
Navel to feet	38.3	,,
Total ...	62.0	,,

Width of the face	6.9	c.m
,, ,, waist	9.5	,,
From arm-pit to arm-pit	11.8	,,
Middle digit of the medius ...	.75	,,
Height of the *prabhāvalī* with *pīṭhikā*	91.3	,,
Height of the *pīṭhikā*	11.2	,,

The *dehāṅgula* of the above sculpture will be ·57 which is ·18 less than the width of the middle digit of its medius. That the former was the measuring unit is proved by the fact that the actual length of the face approximates to its 12 times. The length of the face is, however, a little more (·3) than its width.

8. Hari-Hara (from Bihar), in the Indian Museum (No. 3969); date—C. 10th century A.D.

8. Hari-Hara (from Bihar), in the Indian Museum (No. 3969); date—C. 10th century A.D.

Height (without the head-dress) ...	113.6	c.m.
Face	15	,,
Neck	3.5	,,
Neck to navel	25.2	,,
Navel to feet	69.9	,,
Total ...	113.6	,,

Its *dehāṅgula* is 1·05. Calculating on this basis, there is some discrepancy between the actuals and the textual data.

9. Kārttikeya (from Eastern India), now in the Indian Museum (No. A.S.B.-MS. 2); date—C. 8th century A.D.

Height (including head-dress) ...	47.2	c.m.
,, (without ,,) ...	40.7	,,
Face	4.8	,,
Neck	3.1	,,
Neck to navel	8.3	,,
Navel to feet	24.5	,,
Total ...	40.7	,,
Width of the face	4.8	,,

The *dehāṅgula* of the above sculpture is ·37. The actual face-length of the image is ·36 less than the academic one. But the former is equal to the measurement of the width of the face.

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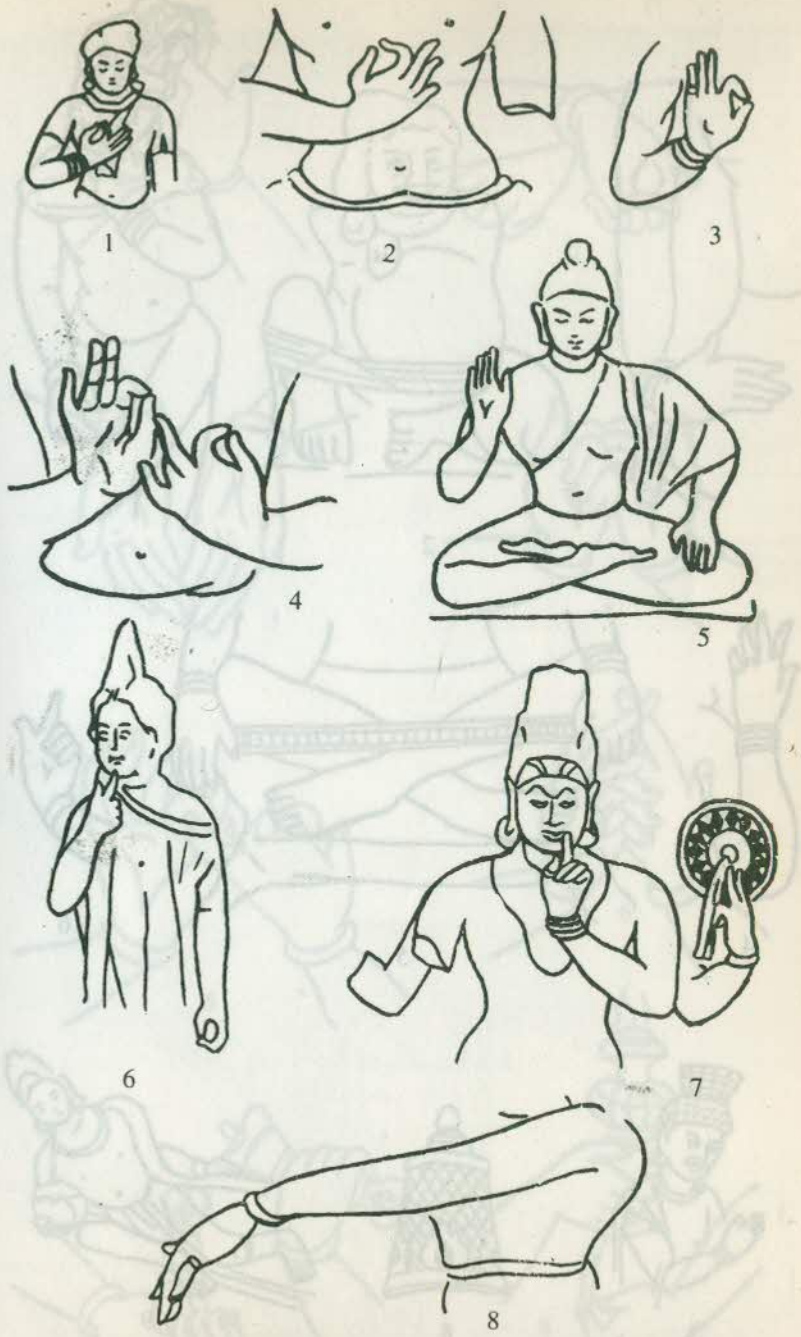
ERRATA

P.	L.	Read	For
18	38	preserved	prescribed
30	16	13	15
37	33	*karmani*	*karmāṇi*
41	21-2	and a human-faced bull or goat	above whom a serpent spreads its head
42	11	protohistoric copper hoard	neolithic
42	35	Add 'Pl. CXVI, 29; CXVIII, 11'	after ' 22
54	31	*savanāni*	*svarāṇi*
58	19	gods,	god
61	15	45	15
64	13	150, f.n.]	251
75	37	IV. 3, 95 ff.	IV. 95 ff.
76	15	III. 17, 6	III. 17
77	36	206	201
85	23	97	99
88	23	61	21
89	14	Edessa (138-61 A.D.)	Emesa (218-222 A.D.)
89	16	42	54
108	23	*cakra*	*ratha*
110	21	6	1
111	12	Balabhūti, Rāmdatta and Kāmadatta of Mathura, on	her hand, very often appears on the coins of Ujjayinī, on
131	15	XLVI	XLVII
144	2	XXXIX	XXIX
154	26	date	data
160	18	figure above whom a serpent spreads its hood	half-human half-animal form of a Nāga
173	23	J.B.R.S.	J.B.O.R.S.
179	14	Pl. XI, Fig. 10	Pl. X, Fig. 9
182	12	XIV	XLIV
183	21	8	9
183	26	9	10
198	24	149	140
198	36	107	98
201	6	*Vichīgrāma*	*Vicchigrāma*
209	20	Ch. 76	Ch. I
217	21-2	ninetieth	nineteenth
252	10	figure above whom a serpent spreads its hood	half-human half-animal form of a Nāga
257	9	coin	coins
257	37	LXXVI	LXXXVI
261	30	33	53
280	27	22	23
287	12	Pl. XI, Fig. 5	Pl. X, Fig. 4
287	13	Pl. XI	Pl. X
333	11	Appendix B, Part II	Appendix B,
353	3	Uttar Pradesh	Madhya Bharat
468	24	XXXVIII	XXVII
482	32	XXXV	XXV
486	3	XL	XV
541	19	IV. 11; VII. 21;	VIII. 21;

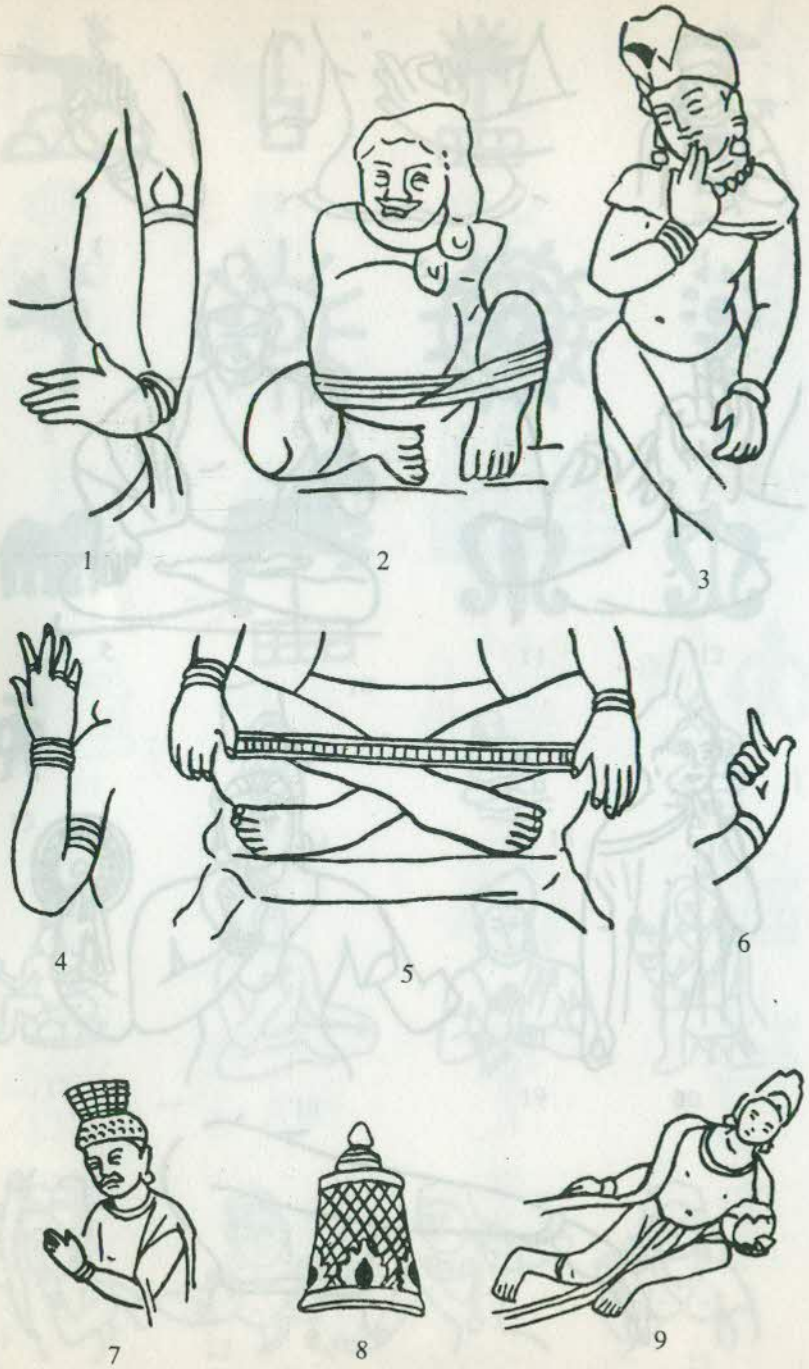
Plates

Coin-devices

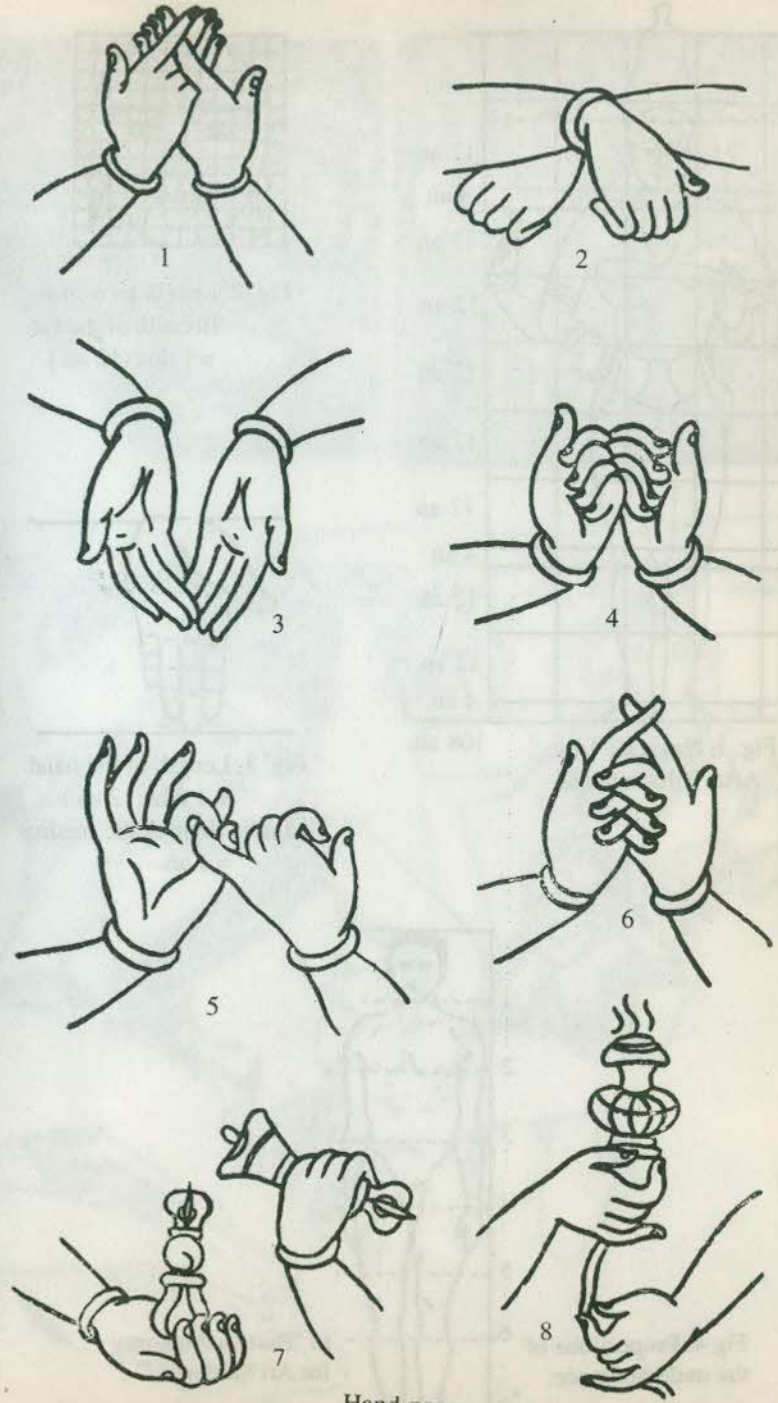
Coin-devices and Art-motifs



Hand-poses



Attitudes and Hand-poses



Hand-poses

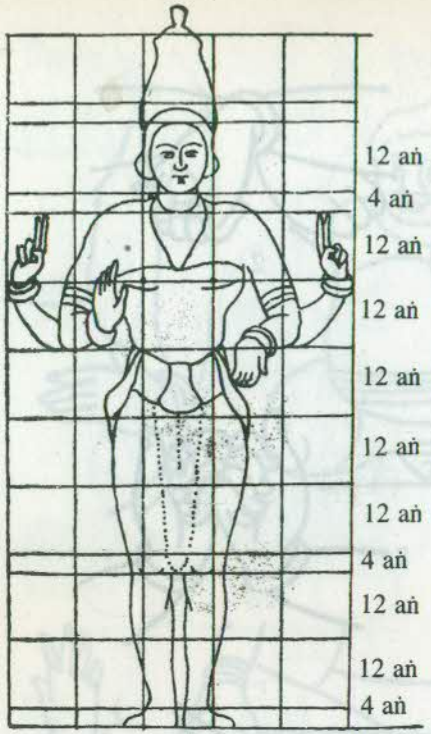


Fig. 1. Navatāla Type.
After Bṛhatsaṃhitā

Fig. 2. Length as well as.
Breadth of the fac
= 1 tāla (12 aṅ.).

Fig. 3. Length of the hand
= 1 tāla (12 aṅ.)
Middle digit of the medius
= 1 aṅ.

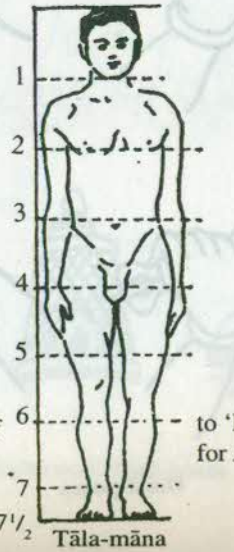
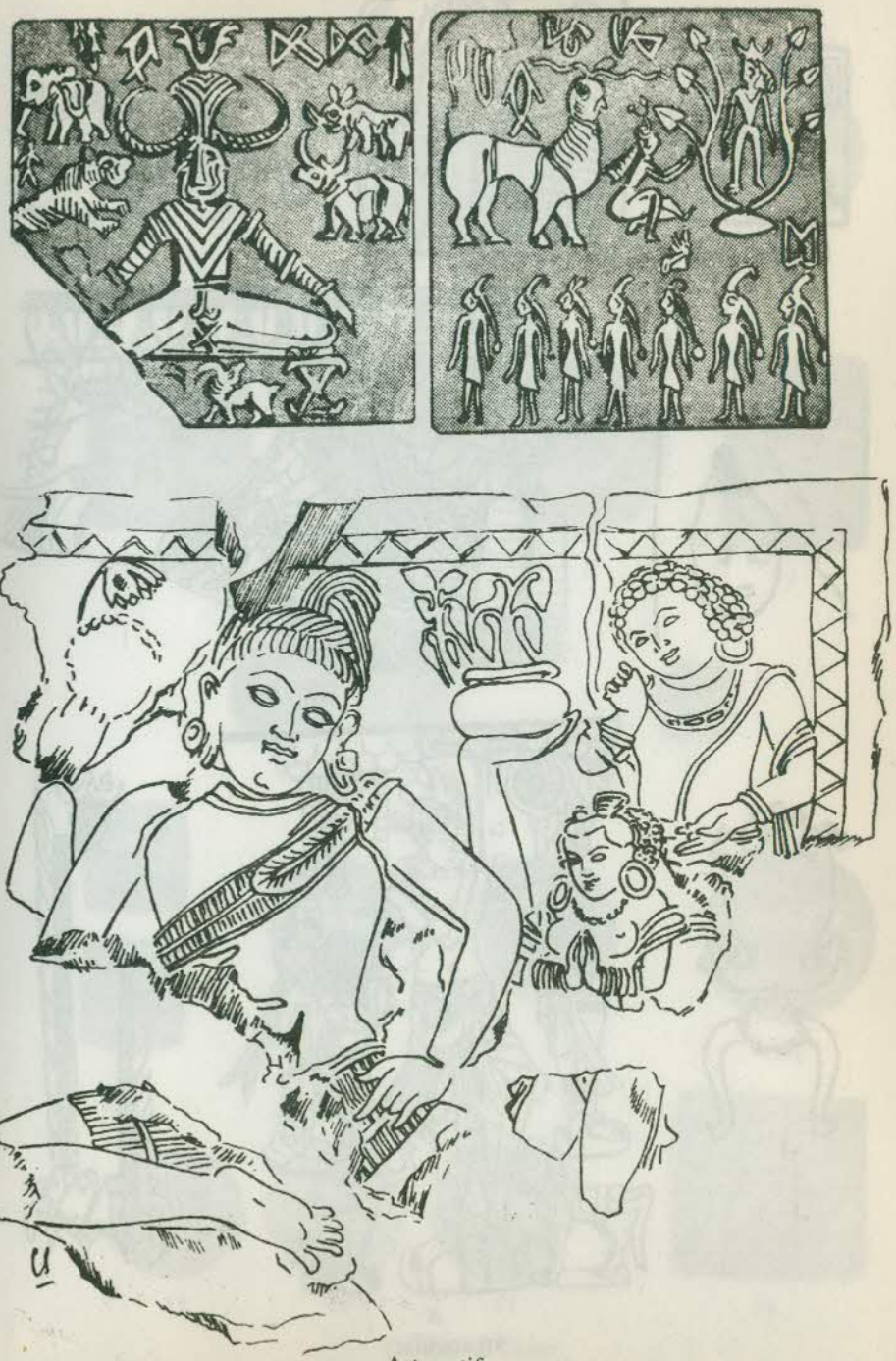


Fig 4. Proportions of the male body acc. to 'Human Anatomy for Art Students'.



Art-motifs

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

Art-motifs

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

Deities on Coins

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

Deities on Coins and Seals

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Deities on Coins and Seals

1

2

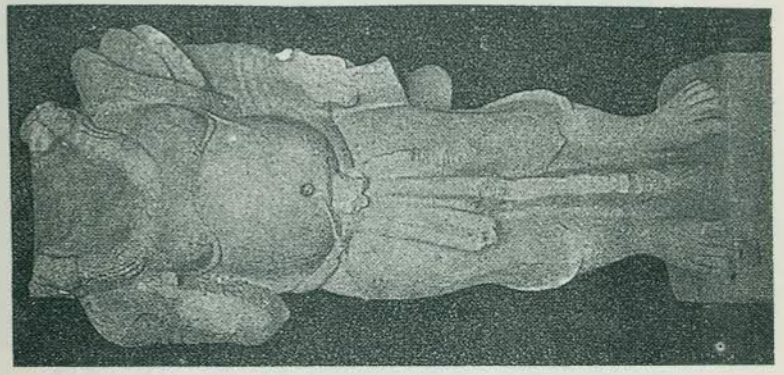
3

4

5

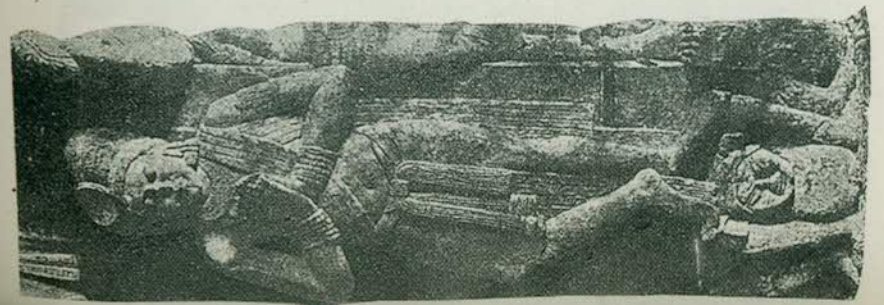
Stone Discs (Murtazigunj, Patna)

4 Bharhut Foreigner



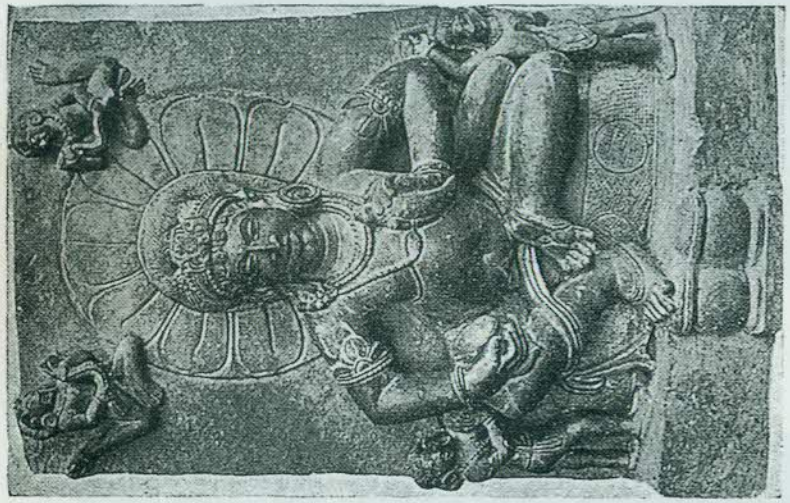
3 Maṇibhadra Yakṣa (Pawaya)

2 Yakṣa Candramukha (Amaravati)



1 Kubera (Bharhut)

3
Nāgarāja (Khiching)



2
Kubera (Mathura)

1
Elāpatra Nāgarāja (Bharhut)

1
Gaṇeśa (Udayagiri, Bhilsa)

2
Nṛtya-Gaṇapati (Khiching)

2
Kārttikeya (Benaras)

1
Gandharva Mithuna (Deogarh)

1
Kārttikeya (Puri)

2
Female Figure (Bharh

1
Sirimā Devatā (Bharhut)

2
Gaja-Lakṣmi (Khiching)

3
Sarasvatī (Asutosh Museum)

1

2

3

Srīvatsa and Srī (Kaveripakkam and Madras Museum)

1
Nāginī (Khiching)

2
Nāginī with Vīṇā (Khiching)

3
Terracotta Yakṣiṇī (Tamulk)

Viṣṇu (Taxila)

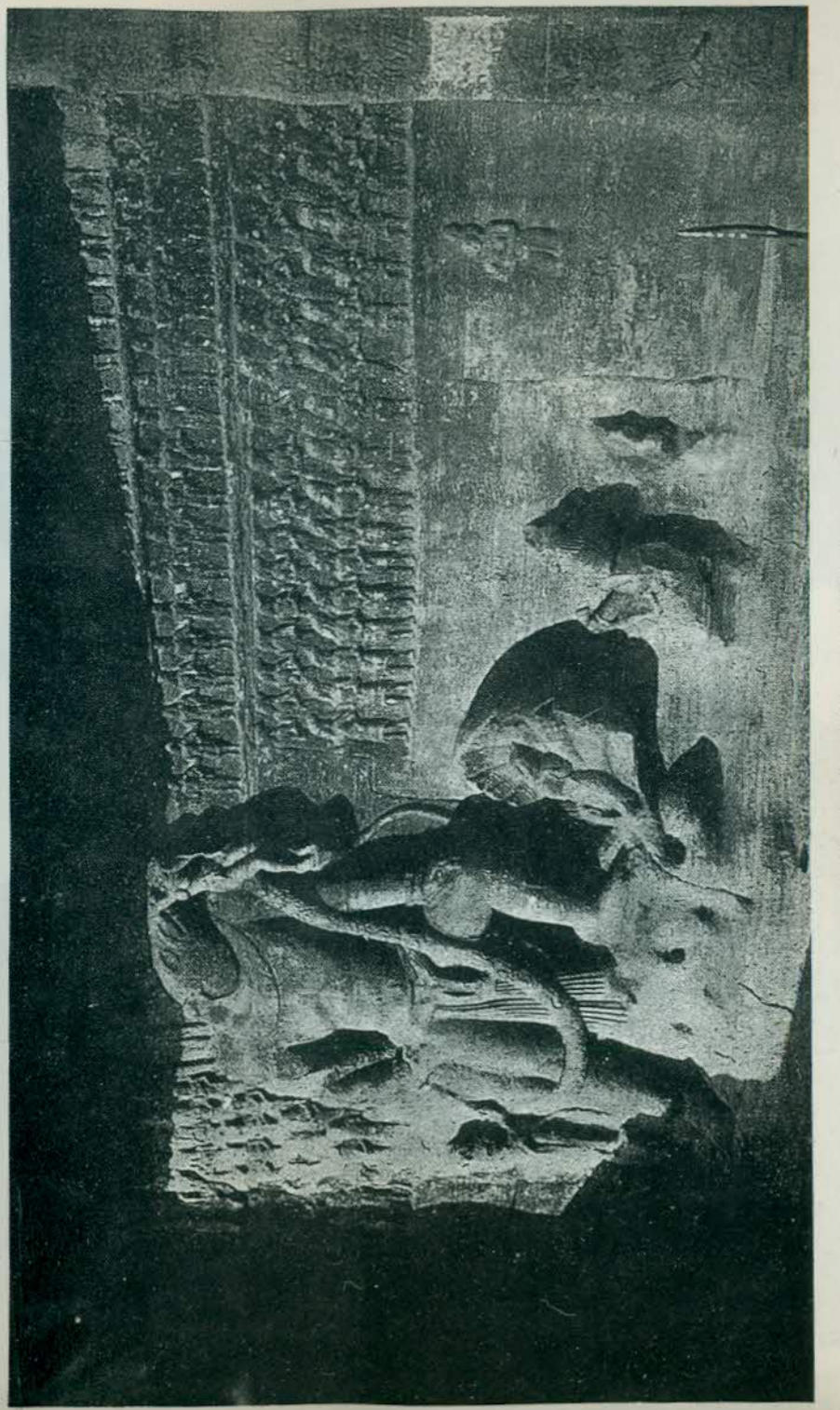
1
Viṣṇu (Nalanda)

2
Bhogaśayana Viṣṇu (Deogarh)

1
Vāmana (Asutosh Museum)

2
Yogāsana Viṣṇu (Mathura)

Viṣṇu Maunavratin (Khajuraho)



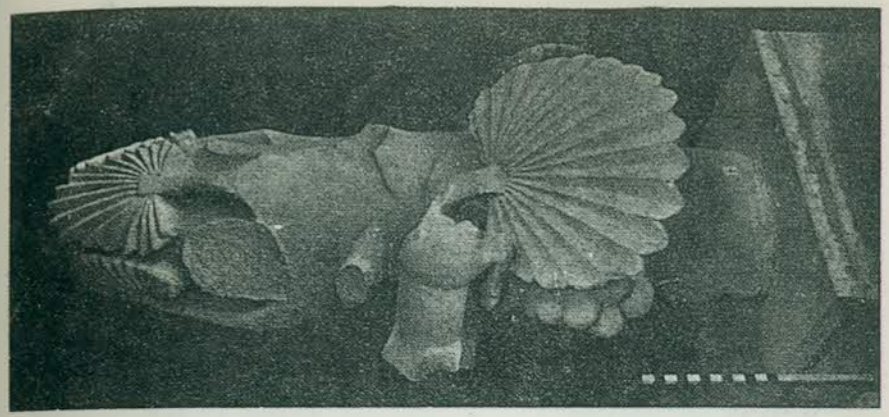
Varāha Avatāra (Udayagiri, Bhilsa)

1
Nanda and Yaśodā with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa (Deogarh)

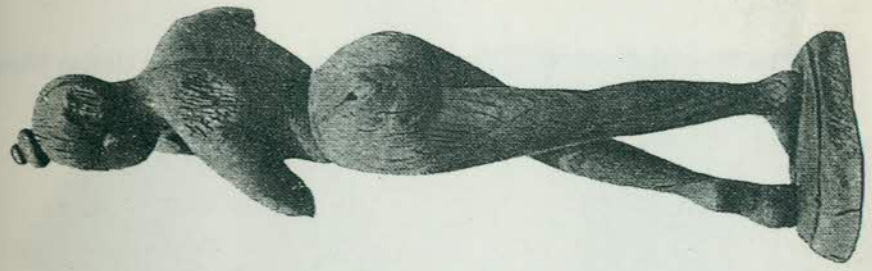
2
Kṛṣṇa Viśvarūpa (Rajshahi)

3
Garuda Capital (Indian Museum)

4
Sudarśana Cakra (Asutosh Museum)



3
Fanpalm Capital (Gwalior Museum)



2
Veṇugopāla (Asutosh Museum)

1
Kariv[illegible]da (Deogarh)

1
Guruḍa on a Terracotta Seal (Nalanda)

2
Abhicārikasthanākamūrti (Indian Museum)

3
Sūrya (Mathura Museum)

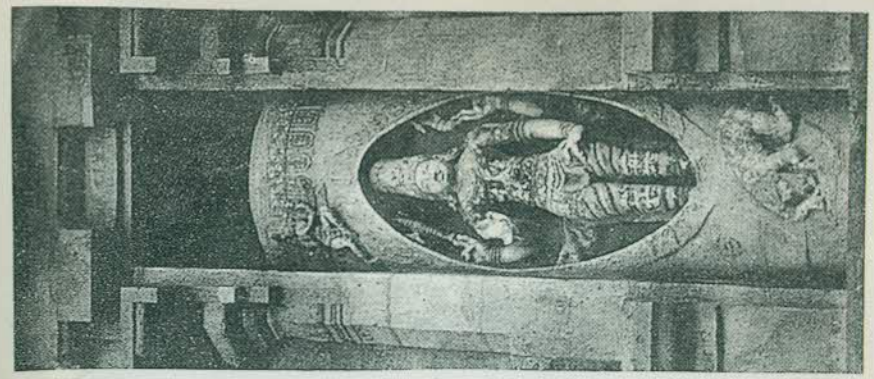
2
Revanta (Rajshahi Museum)

1
Lala Bhagat Sūrya (Lucknow Museum)

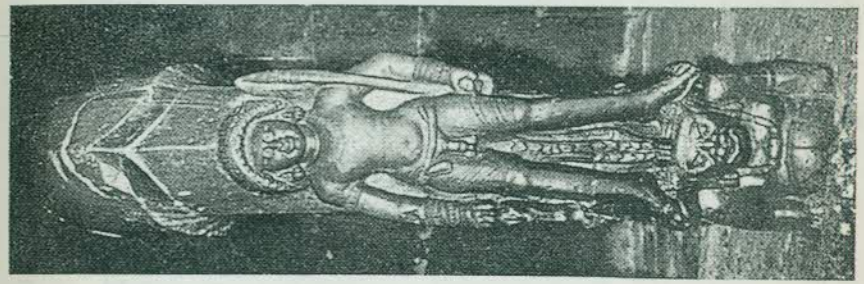
1
Navagraha Cakra
(Khiching)

2
Sūrya
(Khiching)

3
Sūrya

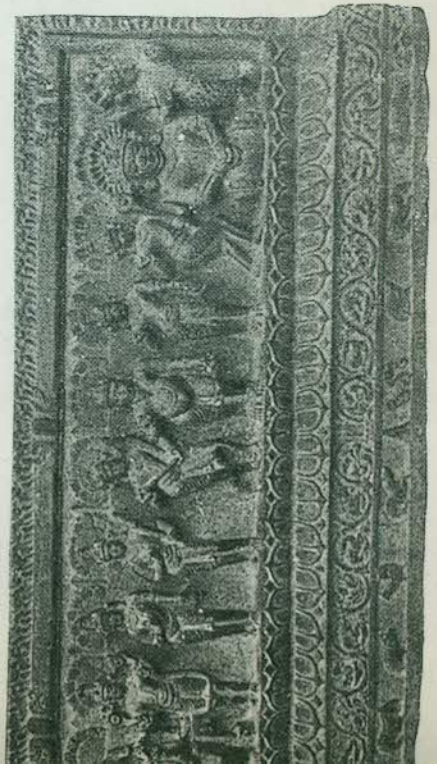


4
Liṅgodbhavamūrti (Tanjore)

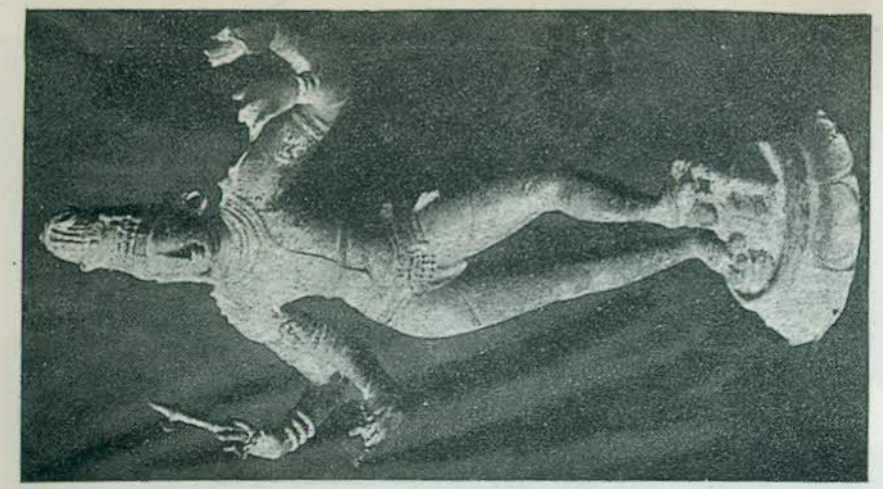


3
Śivaliṅga (Gudimallam)

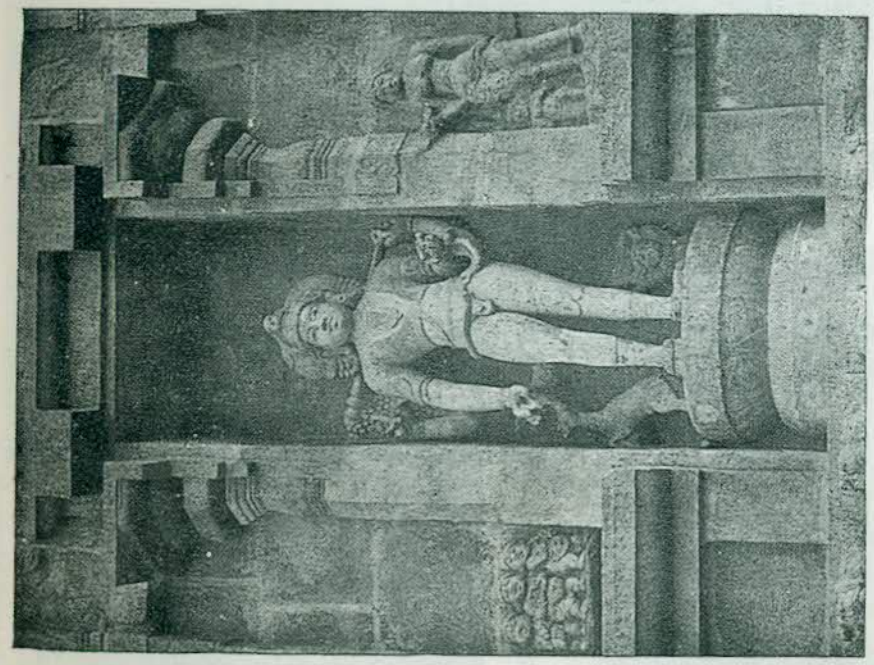
1
Four Grahas (Sarnath Museum)



2
Navagraha Relief (Asutosh Museum)

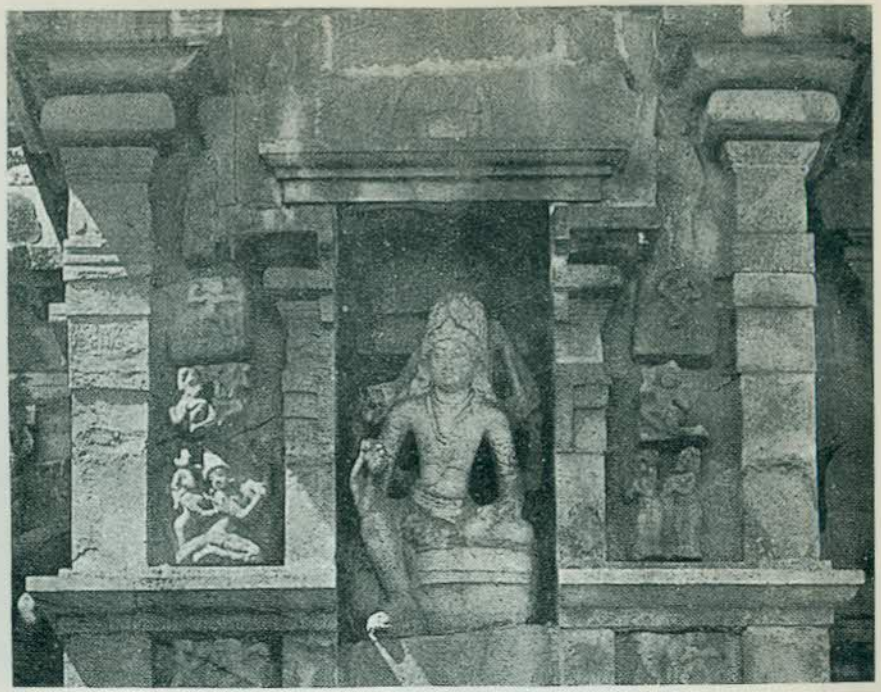


3
Tripurāntakamūrti (Tanjore)



2
Bhikṣāṭanamūrti (Tanjore)

1
Candraśekhara (Khiching)



1
Kāmadahanamūrti (Tanjore)

2

3

1
Śiva on Nandī (Pearse Collection)

2
Śarabheśa (Darasuram)

3

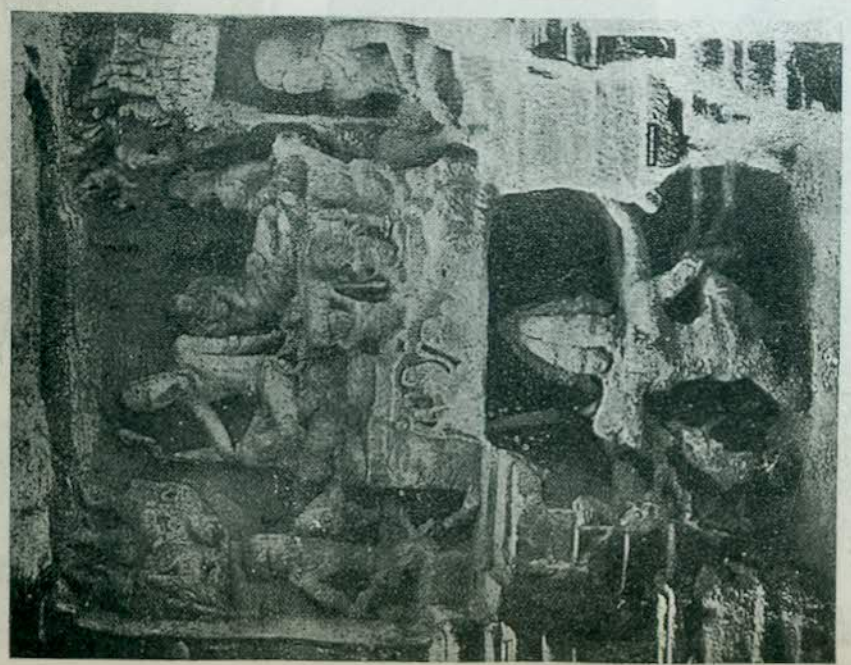
4

1
Vaṭuka Bhairava

2
Vīrabhadra(Puri)

5

2
Śiva Dancing (Badami)



1
Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti (Kailāsa, Ellorā)

1
Śiva Dancing
(Ellora)

1
Kalyāṇasundaramūrti (Ellora)

2

3

1
Lakulīśa (Mukhaliṅgam)

2
Hara-Pārvatī (Khiching)

1
So-called Trimūrti (Elephanta)

2
Gaṅgādharamūrti

3
Sadāśiva

4
Lakulīśa (Asutosh Museum)

1
Śiva Relief (Parel)

2
Mahiṣamardinī (Ellora)

3

4

1
Mahiṣamardinī (from a mould, Peshawar)

2
Mahiṣamardinī (Mayurbhanj)

3

4

1
Brahmāṇī (Puri)

2
Pārvatī (Nalanda)

3
Kaumārī (Puri)

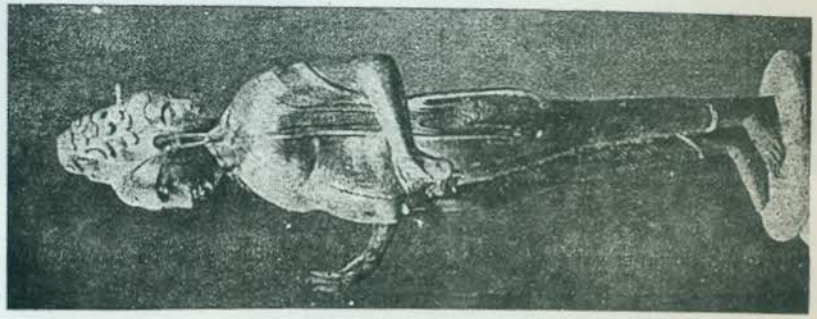
4

5

1
Vaiṣṇavī (Khiching)

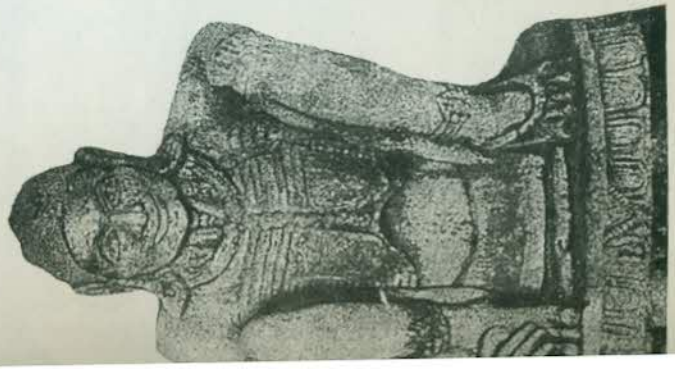
2
Nārasiṃhī (Sutna)

4
Agni (Bihar)



3
Brahmā (Karachi)

2
Mahāmāyā (Dacca)



1
Danturā (Jajpur)

1
Varuṇa (Bhuvaneswar)

2
Pañcāyatana Liṅga (Bihar)

1
Stone Plaque with Cult-Deities (Kaveripakkam)

1
Hari-Hara-Sūrya-Buddha (Indian Museum)

2
Basudhārā (Indian Museum)

3
Sūrya-Lokeśvara (Asutosh Museum)

4
Viṣṇu-Lokeśvara (Rajshahi)